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To All Hands

Books by John Mason Brown

TO ALL HANDS—AN AMPHIBIOUS ADVENTURE

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INSIDES OUT

*

ACCUSTOMED AS I AM

*

BROADWAY IN REVIEW

*

TWO ON THE AISLE

*

THE ART OF PLAYGOING

*

THE MODERN THEATRE IN REVOLT

*

UPSTAGE

*

LETTERS FROM GREENROOM GHOSTS

*

THE AMERICAN THEATRE (1752-1934)

AS SEEN BY ITS CRITICS

(edited with Montrose J. Moses)

*



Rear Admiral Alan G. Kirk, USN

LT. JOHN MASON BROWN, USNR

TO
ALL
HANDS

An Amphibious Adventure

Foreword by

REAR ADMIRAL ALAN G. KIRK, USN

WHITTLESEY HOUSE

New York MCGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY London

TO ALL HANDS

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To
THE AMPHIBIOUS FORCES
off
SCOGLITTI

The opinions contained in this book are the private ones of the writer and are not to be construed as official or reflecting the views of the Navy Department or the naval service at large.

Foreword

Naval warfare relegates many participants to battle stations below decks, where nothing of the fighting can be seen. It has therefore been a frequent practice on men-of-war to have the progress of the battle described over a PA system, or loud-speaker. Such accounts cannot be continuous as, for example, are play-by-play accounts of football, because the same means of reaching into all parts of the ship is also required to pass out battle orders. Nevertheless, it is practicable to give summaries of events from time to time and thus keep all hands informed as to how things are going. Such recitals must, of course, be expressed appropriately, so that the listeners will be intelligently informed without being unduly distracted from their duties.

The Task Force which it was my honor to command in the recent assault upon Sicily comprised many ships. Some were purely combatant types; others were assault ships carrying the soldiers of the 45th Infantry Division. A bulletin of general information was issued to the Force outlining many matters and mentioning the advantages to be gained from internal broadcasting. In addition, once we sailed to the assault from our last port in Africa many details of our exact landing beaches, as well as military objectives of the 45th Division, were carefully explained to all the echelons of the command.

The object of these measures was to make the fullest use of a really great asset which the Armed Services of the United States have in abundance—the resourcefulness of the individual sailor or soldier. There is never enough time to train to perfection. We never have space in the ships for all the equipment

FOREWORD

we would like to take. Our success in combat comes often from brilliant individual initiative. But before a person can act independently without throwing out of gear a carefully drawn plan he must have some idea of what it is all about. Once the rank and file learn how the power-play is intended to be run and have seen by drill and practice that it can be so run, then the cares of the leaders are lifted appreciably. Our soldiers and sailors are the better for knowing the score. This reliance upon the individual is nowhere greater than in amphibious warfare. During our attacks we are poised precariously—one foot on land and the other in the water.

In the case of the flagship, rechristened *Spelvin* in these pages, it was our good fortune to have at hand Lieutenant John Mason Brown, a trained journalist who is especially gifted in the art of public address. He possesses a keen and observant eye with reflexes quick enough to translate astonishment into inquiry. Thus his reactions were immediate—and the meaning of things had to be established at once.

With the salient happenings of the day recorded, the manuscript was approved by my Intelligence Officer and the flagship at broadcast-time each afternoon was studded with groups and knots of men, listening to this yarn of our daily lives and the news of great events.

A. G. KIRK,
Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy,
Commander Sixth Amphibious Force.

September 3, 1943.

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ABBREVIATIONS

DUKW—2 1/2-ton amphibious vehicle, also called "Duck"
 LCI—Landing Craft Infantry
 LCI(L)—Landing Craft Infantry (Large)
 LCT—Landing Craft Tank
 LST—Landing Ship Tank
 MTB—Motor Torpedo Boat
 OS-2-U—Scout Observation plane
 PC—Patrol Craft
 PT—Patrol Torpedo boat
 SOC—Scout Observation plane

To All Hands

"This Is a Democratic War"

This is an invasion story which has behind it a story of its own—a story which must be told first, because it explains the form and purpose of these pages, and that which is special about the Allied invasion of Sicily as it is reflected in them. For this is a book which no more started life as such than Daphne sprouted in her nursery realizing that she was to end up as a tree. The chapters which follow were intended to be air-borne, as they say in the communiqués. They were not meant to be read except by me, and then out loud over a public address system at sea.

Unlike most war writing done during wartime, these pages were not aimed at those away from the scene of action. They were written to be spoken as parts of daily broadcasts to the fifteen hundred soldiers and sailors on the flagship of the U. S. Atlantic Fleet's Amphibious Force, when this Force was heading to and from what turned out to be Sicily. These broadcasts were not even my idea. It was Rear Admiral Alan G. Kirk who thought of them. More accurately, it was he who ordered them.

Our Task Force was two days out from America when the Admiral summoned me to the bridge.

"I want to talk to you about your Battle Station," said he. "You may have seen that you are listed as Bridge Announcer. This means that I want you to be up here on the bridge during the action and report it play-by-play to the men below. Only one man out of ten, you know, on a modern ship in combat can see what is going on. I want you to do their seeing for them.

"THIS IS A DEMOCRATIC WAR"

After all, this is a democratic war, and I believe that men who are willing to give their lives for democracy have the right to be included in what's going on. Including them will be one of your duties. For practice suppose you start this afternoon by broadcasting to the ship on the formation of the convoy."

That was the beginning of these talks.

Needless to say, during the night of the invasion there was no manuscript to read from. The writing was being done all around us by the quivering aurora borealis of our tracer bullets, by the roar of guns, bombs, and planes, and by the midday brightness of self-perpetuating German flares which, when released from Messerschmitts, dislodged the night's blackness and hung above or near us for twenty fearsome minutes at a time, like street lamps having full-grown babies.

During these hours it was just a matter of feeling my way down from the Admiral's uncovered bridge; of stumbling into the stuffy darkness of the darkened Chart Room off the Navigation Bridge below; of shutting the door, if the Chart Room happened to be free; of finding some "studio" space on the floor of a nearby passageway, if it were not; of reaching for the small, round microphone with its trailing cable; of extracting a notebook from the girdle of my life belt; of turning a flashlight, cupped in my hands, on the jottings scribbled across this notebook's pages in the blackness above; of freeing my head from the ache-provoking weight of one of our double-boiler steel helmets; and, after a quick intake of breath and stock, of reporting extemporaneously, at irregular but frequent intervals, what was happening topside between 11:30 at night and 8 in the morning. Plenty was. So it was not hard to find something to talk about for a few minutes before scrambling up to the bridge again, retriever-wise, for more news and more impressions. The unwritten broadcasts of that invasion night I have approximated here as faithfully as possible from the scrawls in my notebook. It was a night which is hard to forget.

There is more, however, to an amphibious assault than the invasion night. There is more than even the months of rugged

"THIS IS A DEMOCRATIC WAR"

training which precede that night. From the Navy's standpoint there is also the getting over to and the getting back from the beaches to be taken. This is where words come in, because they can feed that hunger for news, and for other staples besides news, which cannot anywhere be more acute than it is among men who are headed for what and where they do not know, on a vessel invasion-bound across an ocean at war.

A ship at sea is always a world apart, with no drawbridge to lower and the ocean serving as its limitless moat. In wartime this world grows in isolation—and in intensity or boredom. The ships closest at hand in a convoy seem far away. One gets to know their outlines; almost to sense their personalities. Their physical presence is reassuring. But, though they travel with you in a group and are in constant communication with your bridge, to those having no official business with them these ships remain as uncommunicative as mutes. Their only talk is shop-talk, tersely transmitted in code to those in the know. To those not in the know, to men segregated and lonely in spite of their numbers, a hoisted pennant, a blinking light, or an answering horn may—when noted from a respectful distance—be better than no communication at all, but it can still leave a lot unsaid. The pages which follow were written in the hope of getting some of this said.

My hope, when writing these talks, was to have them speak for the flagship to which they were addressed; to have them serve us on that ship as a diary of the day's happenings; to have them articulate our altering moods and interests, and hence in a sense reflect our changing needs. The concern of these pages is, therefore, the going across to a battle and the coming home from one, no less than the engagement itself. We were gone just a little under two months, though we were off Sicily for only three nights and three days. That leaves a lot of time to be accounted for; a lot of feelings, too; and just as many impressions.

Our ship was not called the *Spelvin*. Security demands that she have here a passion for anonymity as great as was her fond-

"THIS IS A DEMOCRATIC WAR"

ness for gray paint. If *Spelvin* is what she has been rechristened, it is because, as every playgoer knows, "George Spelvin" is that name always to be found on theatre programs when a performer is "doubling" and does not want to have his identity revealed. As for the *Bond*, so called in these pages, that was not her real name either. But I had my reasons for choosing it.

Rereading, cutting, and editing these broadcasts, while in the process of startling them into becoming chapters, I have been surprised to see how large little occurrences loomed to all of us during the first days. These minor happenings did not seem minor then. They would not now, if at present I were at sea. The sea has values of its own, and on a ship in a convoy on the Atlantic in wartime *everything* is suspect. Now that the round trip is completed and I know nothing happened to us, it is hard for me to recapture the suspense of those days when anything might have happened.

What I have been unable to get said in words in this invasion story, even with Lieutenant Earl Burton's valued aid in news-gathering during the battle and on the way back, the indefatigable Lieutenant Samuel F. Schneider and his crew of Navy photographers have managed to say superlatively well with their cameras. What their cameras could not catch, Lieutenant William A. Bostick, Private Anthony Vaiksnoras, and Alexander P. Russo, Printer Third Class, three young artists who labored over maps and shore-line drawings on the way over, have caught vividly in their sketches. I would like to thank them for their share in this book, and also to thank Captain Lucien Ragonnet for the patience he showed when, among many other duties, he daily read these broadcasts to initial them for release.

Mention of these broadcasts in book form compels me to point a grateful, though accusing, finger at George Sessions Perry, who first suggested this volume as a volume. Mention of this book also reminds me that its subtitle is "An Amphibious Adventure." Few war books written by adults have the right to a word so rich in pleasure as "adventure." This one

"THIS IS A DEMOCRATIC WAR"

would not have, except for the fact that, as Admiral Kirk told the correspondents in Washington, "We were damned lucky." We faced the threats of war, the sights and sounds of war, its possibilities, its tension, its suspense and dangers. But on the big ships in our Task Force we were largely spared its horrors. Considering the size of our force, our casualties were incredibly small.

This leads me to the question of how it feels to be in a battle. No one could be less courageous than I am and have less of the hero or even the warrior in his make-up. I expected to be scared to death, and probably will be next time. Instead, I felt a strange exhilaration—the kind of foolish desire to laugh at danger which roller-coaster addicts know when the car is poised at the top of the first and steepest drop. Not that I was unaware of what might happen momentarily and did not dread it. But I found this danger, when so much faith and hope were involved, a heady stimulant. The pleasure I felt in being *there* was greater than any nervousness I knew.

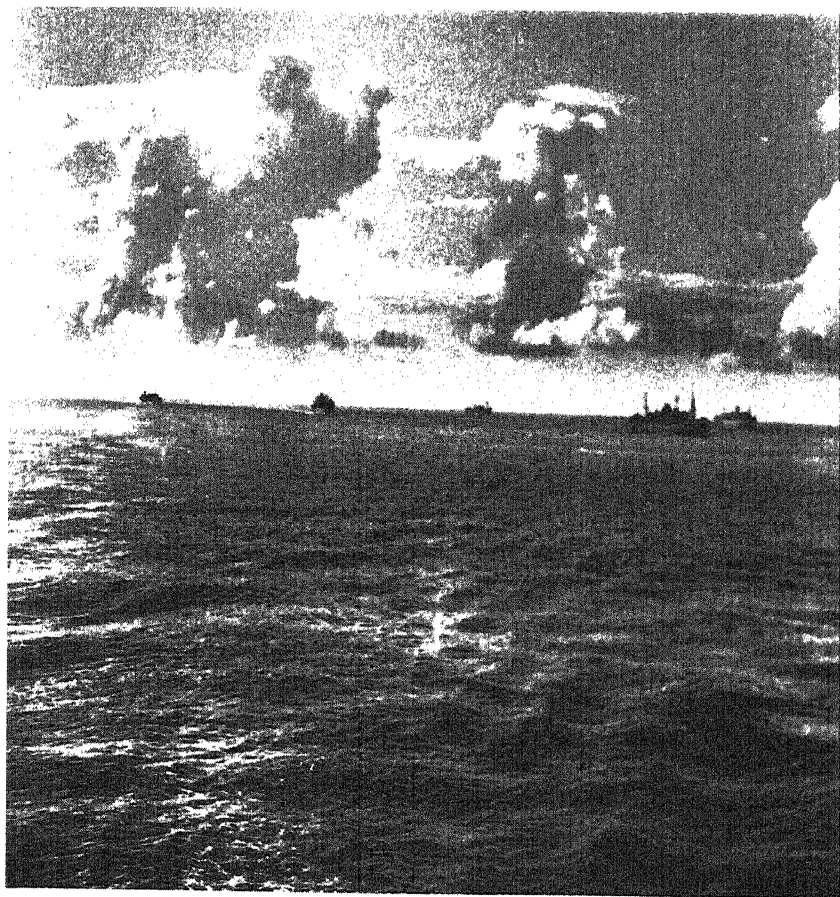
All of us, I think, felt this, even at the worst moments; even when the flak was plentiful, the planes were overhead, and the German flares and bombs were dropping. We would not have changed places with anyone. We were a mixed group on the *Spelvin*: some 300 officers and 1200 men, mainly from New York, Massachusetts, and Ohio, but with almost every state represented, and Pearl Harbor and the Philippines accounted for. There were men who were professional soldiers and sailors, men with long and distinguished careers in the Army and the Navy. There were farm boys and college graduates. There were lawyers, brewery distributors, millworkers, tool designers, upholsterers, steel workers, aircraft mechanics, printers, school-teachers, foremen, molders, shipfitters, foresters, journalists, sheriffs, cooks, and glass workers. There was even a man who gave "horse mill fixer" as his confessed trade. All of them were in uniform. All of them there for the same proud reasons, facing the same ocean, loathing the same enemy, and headed for the same anchorage off southern Sicily.

"THIS IS A DEMOCRATIC WAR"

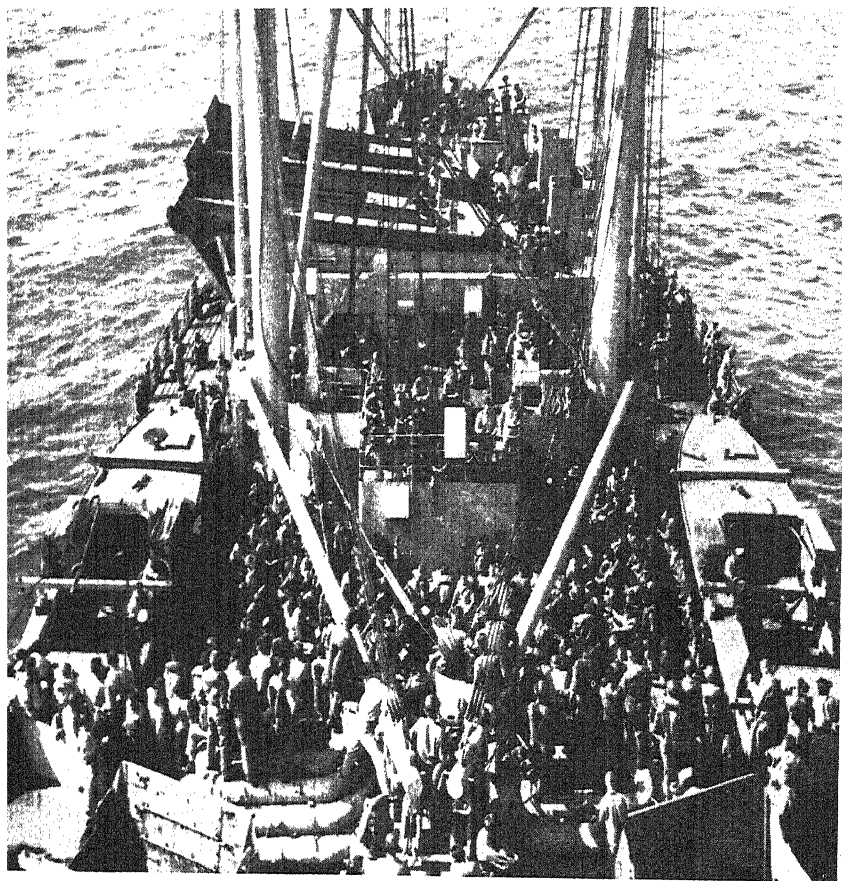
Some people, glancing through these pages before publication, have wondered why to so mixed a group, coming from such mixed backgrounds, I should have quoted, for example, from either Matthew Arnold or Shakespeare. There is only one rule for interesting people that I know of—and even it, alas, is not infallible—and this is to say to them as well as you can what interests you.

Men may lack vocabularies, but men in danger share more thoughts than they are given credit for, because they share the same dilemma. Let death draw near and all men gathered together in twos or threes cease to be shy in their discussions either of it or of life. No school of philosophy can boast a better teacher than peril, when it approaches at a pace leisurely enough to be contemplated. As for Matthew Arnold and Shakespeare being read to men on their way into battle, there seems to me to be nothing strange or affected in this. The threatened beauties, the imperiled values, the free minds which they symbolize, supply this war with one of its most potent excuses. The poet who speaks only to a coterie is scarcely worth his bay leaves. The great poets are great for many reasons, among which is the simple fact that they are not fair weather friends. Often the mere magic of their music is solace enough.

In my role of a water-soaked Woollocott, a sea-swept Pepys, a wet Swing, a moist Baedeker, a damp Greek messenger, and a damper Polonius, it was my hope to amuse and my duty to try to interest all these men. You cannot condescend to people you respect as much as I respect them.



A World Apart



News Time

1. *From the Bridge*

A ship has farseeing eyes. It can see with the binoculars of lookouts and officers. It is always on the lookout, by day and by night, scanning the horizon, for reasons you can guess. Yet the fact remains that only one man out of ten on a ship in combat can see the battle in which all ten men are actively engaged.

This is why I am here, to see for those on the *Spelvin* so stationed that they cannot see what is going on and what may vitally concern them.

Take for example the present moment. We are *not* in That Town where we were stationed. To some of us this alone seems already half the battle. We have left America. We are at sea. The break from home has been made. In convoy formation we are zigzagging our way for protection across the Atlantic. We are making several hundred sea miles a day.

Tomorrow morning the heat we feel will be added to by the Gulf Stream.

Watch the sea by day and you will find clumps of seaweed floating by in it, and flying fish. By night, if you happen to observe it after lights, phosphorus will lighten the ocean. These are other indications of the Gulf Stream. So is the deep, deep blue of the water just now.

Until we reached the channel's end, we traveled single file. When next you come above you will see that the ships we convoy are divided into columns which we lead and abreast of which, on the port and starboard sides, are cruisers. Each of these columns is several ships deep. Trailing them is another

FROM THE BRIDGE

cruiser, and screening this convoy are destroyers—lots of them—some far ahead, serving as pickets, others protecting the flanks, still others the rear.

That is our present position. Or, to be more technical, that is our cruising disposition. The interval between ships is several hundred yards; the interval dividing the columns is about twice that.

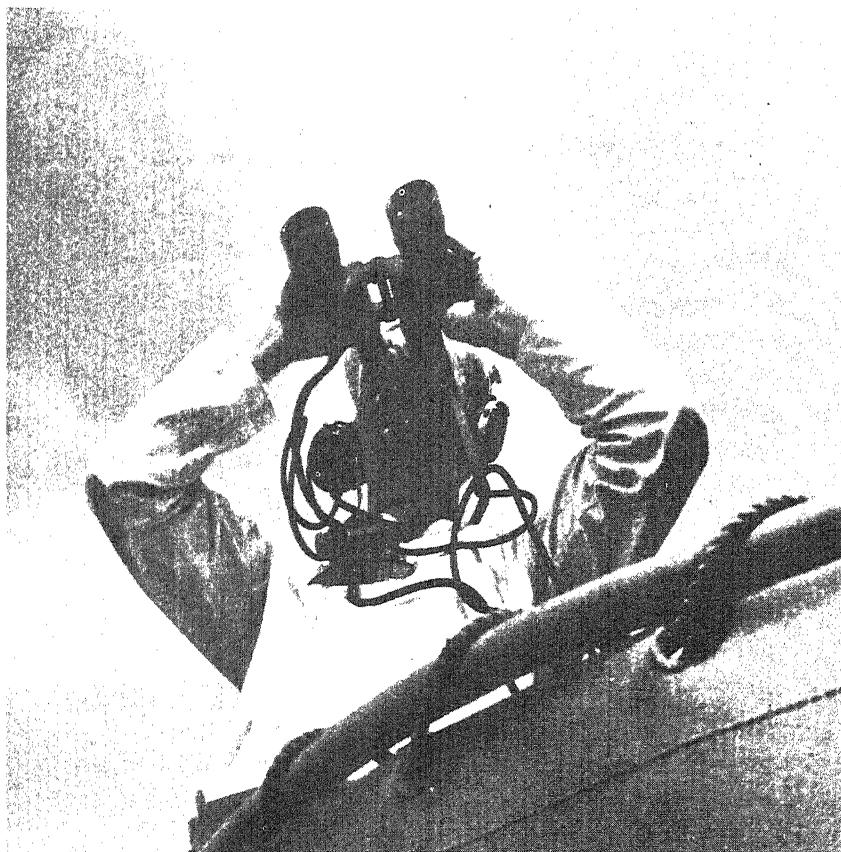
With us we have oilers, amphibious supply ships, one sea-going tug, and over a dozen troopships.

We have excellent air coverage. Some of you may have noticed the Navy blimps which followed us out last night, and seen or heard today the planes dispatched for patrol duty from our attending cruisers. Other land-based planes will soon be supporting us.

We are on our way.



Shooting the Sun



Ship's Eyes

2. *Will You Tell Me Where?*

You must have noticed how at irregular intervals the *Spelvin* and her attending ships change their course; how we go darting first to one side and then to the other, like a well-regimented school of whales. Be reassured. We are not suffering from gyroscopic difficulties. This careening is not due to high spirits, uncertainty, or even sunstroke on the part of the pilot. It is a maneuver, moreover, which is capable of some fifty-seven Heinz-like variations.

Obviously this steady advancing, even this drunken zigzagging leads somewhere. Everybody knows that, including the squire of Berchtesgaden. But where? Precisely where? It is our duty to keep Hitler guessing. By Hitler I mean his submarine commanders, too, should one of these just happen to introduce us to a new vertical course. We can all see the need for this much secrecy.

You who are going, however, must want to know where you are going. This much I know; this much I have permission to divulge. We are not—I repeat, we are not—headed for either of the Dakotas, or for the Indian or Pacific oceans. May I give you a hint? Before too many days or weeks we should see friendly airplanes sent out from the Old World to protect us, even as today those who have been topside have been seeing airplanes dispatched from the New World for the same reason. But where in the Old World are we headed? The Old World is almost as large as its past is long, and its coast line is almost as irregular. Where indeed? For the present, at least, this must remain a secret. So let us be patient in our suspense. We will know in the war's good time.



Blinking

3. *Every Living Creature*

On a transport once there was a colored boy making his first ocean voyage. On the second day out he rushed up on deck to survey his ship's progress. All he saw was the same stretch of rolling ocean that had amazed him the day before. "Lordy me," he cried. "Sumpin' sho must be wrong. After all dat tootin' of de horn and dat huffin' of the engines, heah we is just exactly where we wuz yestertiddy."

Don't be deceived by appearances. The good news for today is that we are approximately one thousand miles from That Town, which not only marks progress but several steps forward in the right direction.

Appropriately enough, this fifth day at sea was heralded last night in the twilight by the sighting of an injured whale. Why should the sighting of a whale be an appropriate beginning for the fifth day? If the Padre will share his Bible with me for a moment, I can explain. It was on the fifth day that the Lord "created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind."

Well, last night the destroyer ahead of us sent us a message which, as relayed to Captain Mather, read, "Injun whale sighted to starboard." Now an Injun whale—Cherokee, Algonquin, or Ojibway—being a member of the Moby Dick clan that Captain Mather in all his wide experience had never seen, the good Captain expressed his eagerness to meet up with one. But the whale, ill-fated enough to have had submarines built in his image, was never sighted, at least by the *Spelvin*. The fact that a whale can be a casualty of our sea power proves how truly global this war is. The pilot who spotted him was taking no chances. The whale, as many another whale must have done since the war's beginning, gave his life for democracy. He was just another innocent bystander. Sad as his plight is, we cannot blubber over him. We have other amphibians to think of. A live convoy is better than a dead whale.



But Where?

EVERY LIVING CREATURE

Toward 11 o'clock this morning the soldiers sun-bathing on the forecandle were rudely awakened by the hot music of our guns. One by one around the ship our guns spoke their pieces, like angry lawyers at a trial, but only in the spirit of rehearsal.

Today the *Spelvin* was pushing forward through dark blue water strewn with what looks like storefuls of bathtub sponges but what is really algae, such as assembles in the Sargasso Sea. But where was the *Spelvin* pushing? Again that question; that agitating question. Yesterday, you may recall, it was revealed here that the Old World is our destination. It still is. Only may I drop one more hint? Or strip-tease one more revelation, in the classic manner of Gypsy Rose Lee?

Do you remember that proudly jutting rock which has so long served the Prudential Life Insurance Company as its advertising symbol? The rock was, of course, Gibraltar, or "Gib," as the English familiarly call it. Gibraltar is a rock which of recent years has grown in importance as a symbol of strength and our world's insurance. We are headed toward that rock as surely as the Pilgrims were headed for another and infinitely smaller stone of equal historical significance. As for what comes thereafter, we do not yet know. Gibraltar still leaves us with a lot of Rand McNally to choose from.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(Italy) At 1:30 P.M. today word reached us that Pantelleria has surrendered. The fall of this Italian island came after eighteen days of terrific air bombardment by the Allies. It came, moreover, when Mussolini was preparing to celebrate the third anniversary of his having dragged Italy into the war. (London) At a press conference Major General Eaker said yesterday that, having doubled in size since March and growing at a rate of 15 to 30 per cent monthly, the United States Bomber Command was able to send nearly 300 of its heavy bombers over France on a three-way raid on May 29. (Washington) Secretary of War Stimson told his press conference today that he considered the recent victories of the Chinese armies over the Japanese to be the most important action of the war fronts last week.



"Anyway, we know it's Gib"

4. *Strange Lights at Sea*

Early this morning—which is only the Navy's way of saying late last night—the tranquillity of this convoy life was interrupted for a few tense moments. These moments were sufficiently voltaged with mystery to provide the day with most of its conversation.

But to go back to the small, dark hours. Most of us were then enjoying the rarest commodity (next to cold drinks) that this ship has to offer—sleep. The excitement began at 5 A.M., when outside it was as dark as censorship and most of us (to be nautical) were still in the sack. We were dreaming, among other things, of late Sunday breakfasts, of days when we were not our own washerwomen, of laundry that sometimes came back to us, and of Sunday papers heavy enough to lay giants low with hernia. Indeed, we indolent ones were taking our ease, looking forward—of course—to the happy, happy moment when we could saunter up to General Quarters at the appallingly late hour of 5:54 A.M.

Well, at 5:10 A.M. the excitement began, which as late as lunchtime brought a destroyer alongside of us for some naval messages confidentially exchanged through megaphones. From the cruiser to our port side in the early morning blackness came word that an unexplained light had been spotted on the horizon.

Now strange lights at sea arouse interest even in peacetime. In wartime they quicken that interest into apprehension. They arouse suspicions, too. They call for decisive action and speedy investigation. Both were forthcoming.

If you saw two of our Task Force seaplanes winging their

STRANGE LIGHTS AT SEA

way into the dawn, flying farther than they usually do and gradually turning into dots which vanished in the distance, it was because they had gone out on a searching party. If during the morning you missed one of our cruisers and two destroyers from the steel circlet usually protecting us, it was because these three vessels were racing to the horizon as a posse to track down that unidentified light.

What added to the tension of this interval of investigation was that this mystery ship—this solitary ship, as it turned out to be; this lonely ship, so unwelcome and alarming in the darkness; this ship, which might have been anything—failed, when first challenged, to respond with a completely satisfactory identification. If it stammered in its signalling, it may have been because it was more surprised by what loomed out of the blackness beside it than our cruiser had been by the light spotted on the horizon. A cruiser and two destroyers confronted it, frowning on it and encircling it, eager and prepared for action.

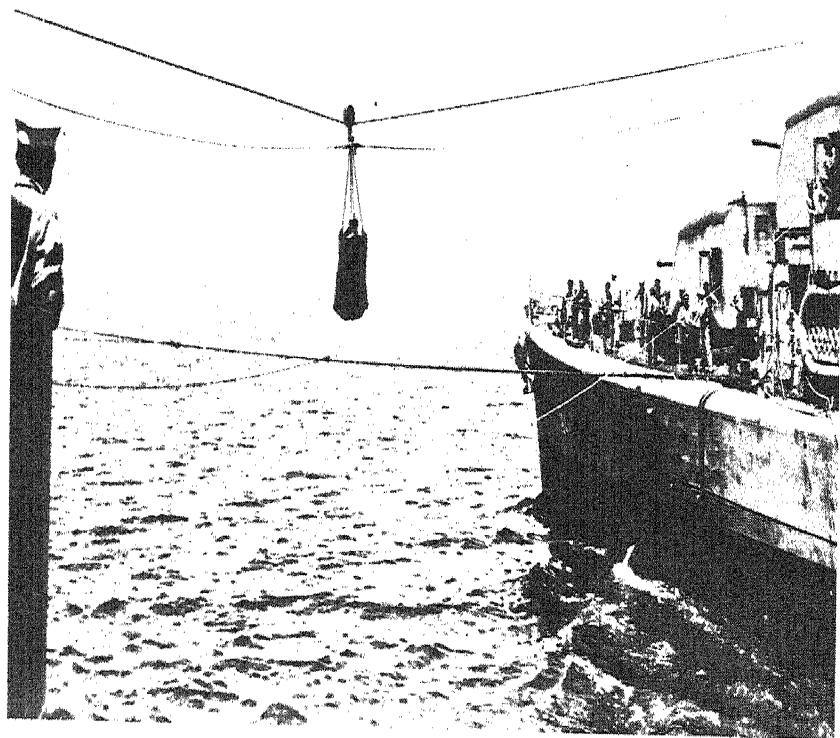
The vessel was boarded and a visiting search conducted according to international law. Instead of being the Flying Dutchman, a blockade runner, or an enemy raider, the ship turned out to be a merchantman—American Exchange Line—headed from Africa to America and capable of making sufficient speed to run the risks of crossing the Atlantic unescorted. Aboard her were found an Armed Guard crew and American Army personnel. Also found aboard was someone downright foolish, if not suicidal, in the woeful lack of care he had taken in dimming his ship's lights. Be that as it may, the vessel was cleared and given permission to proceed at 7:25 A.M. Since then the cruiser and the two destroyers have returned peaceably to the fold.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(Allied Headquarters, North Africa) The greatest concentration of aerial assault in history forced the Italian fortress island of Pantelleria to hoist the white flag of unconditional surrender

STRANGE LIGHTS AT SEA

yesterday. Although neither Hitler nor Mussolini had admitted Pantelleria's fall eight hours after the island's surrender, a Berlin broadcast spoke of the defense in the past tense. The Italian garrison is said to have run up the white flag at 11:40 A.M. Eastern War Time. British troops, landing at noon under the protection of naval guns, met with little resistance. By 12:22 P.M. all points had been occupied. (*London*) British military observers said yesterday that they expected the surrender of the Italian island of Lampedusa to follow the fall of Pantelleria. Lampedusa, which is eight miles south of Pantelleria, was raided by a British scouting party early this week and is thought to be short of provisions. (*Washington*) President Roosevelt invited the Italian people on Friday to revolt against Mussolini. (*Valetta*) While the North African Air Force was pounding Pantelleria into submission, RAF fighter bombers were attacking targets in Sicily and the southwestern mainland of Italy. (*Allied Headquarters, Southwest Pacific*) General MacArthur's aircraft swarmed over the islands north of Australia today to give the Japs a plastering along a 2000-mile front.



Emergency Case

5. *Salute to One Man*

Between 6 and 7 last evening, when the sunset was in its full brilliance, a war drama—touching, encouraging, ironic, and peculiarly American—was enacted off our starboard side.

There it was, at least, that the principal performer could be found. He had not asked to be starred. Yet in his honor this whole Task Force slowed down. All of these ships, these cruisers, and these destroyers reduced their speed; slowed down on their grim errand of war and conquest; slowed down as a merciful salute to one man. For twenty-five minutes they crawled along, while men lined the rails to look anxiously at the dot which, from a distance, was this unknown man.

On the Navigation Bridge, the Signal Bridge, and on the Admiral's Bridge binoculars were trained with apprehension on the transport behind us and on the destroyer which bobbed alongside her even in a table-smooth sea. More particularly, what everyone on the *Spelvin's* deck and on the decks of other vessels within the range of vision was watching breathlessly was the slim line which united the transport with the destroyer; this slim line and the man who was to cross on it.

He had done no act of exceptional valor, this man upon whom Admiral Kirk's glasses were tensely focused. He was, at least as yet, no hero fresh from feats of daring against a treacherous foe, this man for whom all the engines of these ships had reduced their speed and upon whom the eyes of a General, of Colonels and Majors, of Captains and Commanders, and of sailors and soldiers were trained.

He was merely a victim of misfortune; a man on a destroyer

SALUTE TO ONE MAN

whose appendix was misbehaving badly and who was being rushed to a transport's sick bay for treatment and perhaps an operation. In plain civilian terms he was an Emergency Case. Yet the method of insuring speedy care for him was dramatically different from that dash in a clanging ambulance through unheeding traffic, which would have been his lot had he still been a civilian.

The tension grew when on this slim line the Stokes Stretcher first wavered into view. Over the life boat, waiting in readiness below, the stretcher swayed and spiraled like a kite in the wind. Then, after being tested while empty, the stretcher was pulled back to the destroyer for its patient. When next it set out, with the man—the unknown man—in it, it moved slowly, steadily to the security offered by the transport. A few minutes later the destroyer had broken away and was headed back to her usual station. Then all these ships, these cruisers, and the two other destroyers were once again moving forward to the unsentimental—certainly, the inconsiderate—business of war.

Few appendicitis cases receive such attention from so many men. Three weeks hence no single casualty, nor many casualties, either will or can halt this force. But, until actually engaged by the enemy, every one of us must have been encouraged by this care taken of us all and by being reminded that, as Americans at war, we carry our decencies with us. Something tells me with shuddering certainty that, had the same thing happened in the German or the Japanese Navy, the operative case—the unknown man—whose only misdeed and distinction was to have been seriously ill, would not have received the same consideration. I suspect that for the sin of being human he would have been left to the mercy of the sea.

P.S. A recent message from the transport reveals that the patient received yesterday was S. E. Hodge, Ship's Cook Third Class. His condition is reported as being excellent.

Whether the business of our own sick bay was swelled after the hour this afternoon which was somewhat disconcertingly known as "The Happy Hour," I do not know. I do know that

SALUTE TO ONE MAN

the gloves were on, that chins were up, and fists were flying on the sun deck.

Some eyes were clipped, too, and a nose or so looked as if it were an outlet for the Red Sea. Even the names of the contestants sparred on the program. "Klipper" Klipps, "Gruesome" Graeffe, "Boilerman" Bolton, "Baby Boats" Belevender, "Murderous" Marine Marker, and "Killer" Talamantes—these are not names that anyone would like to meet in a telephone book on a dark night. They are as full as are their owners of fe, fi, fo, fum. There was precious little waltzing on the blistering mat. Everyone watching seemed to enjoy the slamming hugely, and from the security of ringside seats to be full of courageous and wise advice. The fights were good ones—and hot. So was the incidental music, the dancing by the messboys, and the afternoon.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Allied Headquarters, North Africa*) Lampedusa surrendered to the Allies yesterday after twenty-four hours of intermittent Naval and Air bombardment. (*Ankara*) The Germans are reported to have supplied the Italians with 900 aircraft, 600 of them bombers and the remainder fighters, according to a usually reliable source. The Germans, fearing landings at several points, are also reported to be massing aircraft in Crete and at Salonika, and constructing airdromes in Croatia, Jugoslavia, and Bulgaria. (*Moscow*) The 700-plane raid hurled against Germany Thursday night was the greatest Soviet air drive of the war. It destroyed 150 Nazi planes, and damaged runways, hangars, fuel dumps, and ammunition depots.



Advice from the Ringside

6. *Seagoing Stogies*

Since the war's beginning, tripod-sitting has been one of the world's most overcrowded professions. Delphi is the greatest boom town of the decade, and everyone an oracle. There is scarcely a man or woman in the United States who has not a gypsy's assurance about future events and who does not treat international affairs as if they were so many tea leaves collected at the bottom of his or her particular cup. So, without Major George Fielding Eliot's permission and against my wishes, let me borrow his dark glasses and tell you what the immediate future holds for all of us.

My theme is the submarine. I mean the German submarine, more affectionately known as the U-boat. The submarine, you must admit, has grown in interest for each one of us since we left port. He is a strange underwater denizen, this seagoing stogie, this oil-lapping mammal, this man-filled steel whale. Rumor has it that he grows hungriest at dawn and dusk. Then it is that those thyroidal eyes of his are most apt to bulge above the ocean, scanning the horizon for food.

Now to my prophecy, which is so safe as to be cowardly. Until we drop anchor, you may be certain that more submarines will be sighted by us than the Germans and Italians have ever dreamed of producing. Let a shark raise a fin, let a whale flap his tail, let a streak of oil be spotted in the distance, let five men forgather near the rail merely to shoot the breeze, and—presto!—a submarine will have been spawned, if not seen.

Yes, in the coming days and nights we will see more submarines than there are submarines to see. We will see them

SEAGOING STOGIES

in the mind's eye. We will see them floating in the waves of scuttlebutt. We will see them because we have just seen a man who saw a man who heard from another man that a submarine had been sighted. Mainly we will see these submarines because every object sighted on this mysterious ocean is quite properly suspect.

There will be both sense and necessity in this profusion of false alarms. This is one time when the cry of "Wolf! Wolf!" from anyone aboard the *Spelvin* is not only to be pardoned but encouraged. We are at war, never forget, upon an ocean which is also at war. Our eyes—the eyes of every one of us—are the ship's eyes. Our need is to use our eyes for the ship's safety. And also, for the safety of the ship and the Task Force, to control our tongues after we have reported to the proper authorities what we may think that we have seen.

There is no sense mincing matters. We are in a danger zone. The Germans have not, so far, called all their submarines home. We are strongly protected and escorted. Our duty is not to be anxious but to be on the alert. The simple facts of our submarine "encounters" up to the present moment are these. Last night there were reports—reports, please note—of three "contacts" with submarines from our far-flung picket line of destroyers. At 7 o'clock in the evening a destroyer on our port side, having reported such a contact, broke away from the line and moved far out to drop depth charges. Remember, however, that these three reported contacts were unconfirmed. But do not forget that we are at war; that General Quarters are neither the bores nor the chores they may seem to those who would like, and may need, more sleep than we get. They may be matters of life and death.

This brings me to a sorrowful announcement. Yesterday morning an OS-2-U left one of our cruisers at 10 o'clock to patrol the Atlantic in our interest. The plane failed to return when due at 2:00 P.M. By 3:15 P.M. three destroyers and four other planes had been sent in search of the missing fliers. It was from this search that two of the planes came back to an-

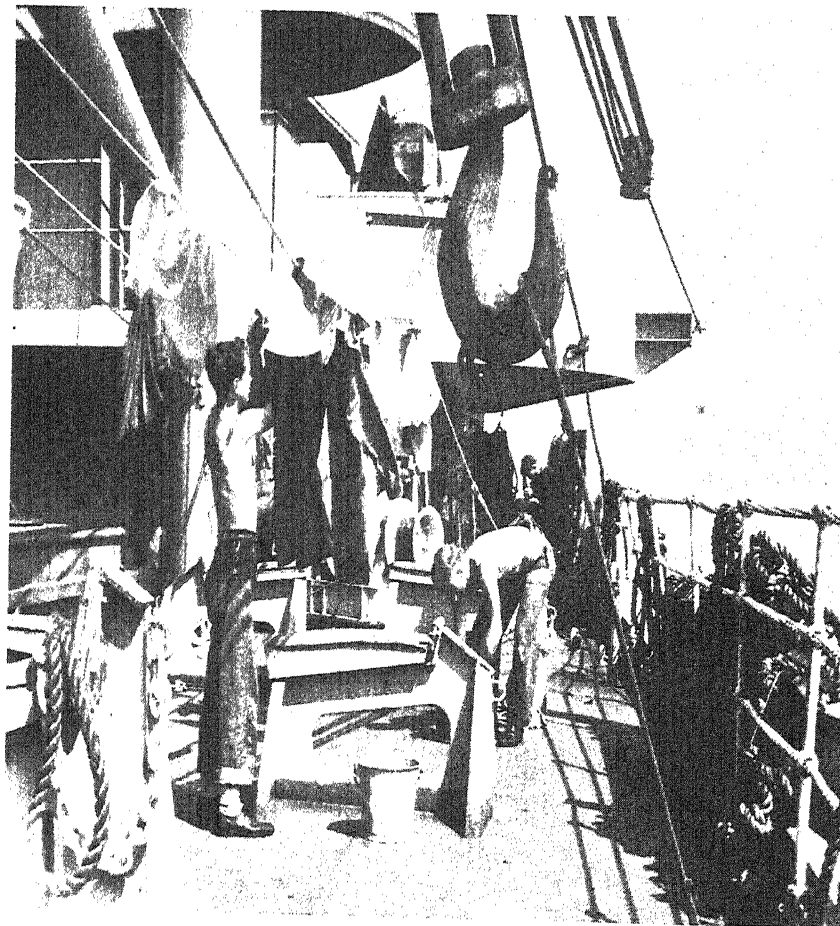
SEAGOING STOGIES

other of our cruisers shortly before the sun set at 8:57. After wide circling, the destroyers returned to the line at 3:05 this morning. The report, I regret to state, was what had to be described as a "futile search." At 4 this afternoon Father Ballinger celebrated mass for the missing fliers on the quarter-deck. All hope for them is not yet abandoned. The weather is in their favor. So is the continued smoothness of the sea.*

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Allied Headquarters, North Africa*) General Eisenhower's headquarters announced that the Italian island of Linosa, near the fallen Lampedusa, surrendered early Sunday morning. (*Italy*) Rome radio reports that the Fascist Party has sent recommendations to Mussolini that all luxury restaurants be closed. (*London*) The dispatch published on Sunday in a London paper, stating that mutinies have broken out in the Italian Navy, has been discredited in Allied Naval Circles. (*Moscow*) Reports of a raid by 700 Russian planes against the Germans were interpreted by observers as increasing evidence that the Soviets are joining wholeheartedly in the Roosevelt-Churchill plan to knock Germany and Italy out of the air while the Allies prepare to invade Europe. (*Washington*) American fliers, fighting a rough and tumble dogfight with fifty Japanese planes over the Solomon Islands, sent twenty-nine, or possibly thirty-three, of these enemy aircraft hurtling into the sea.

* See pages 65-66.



Wash Day

7. *Dirty Linen*

At 7:35 last night a destroyer off our port bow reported a "contact." Once again the peace of the twilight after-dinner hours was abruptly disturbed by the giant's snoring of the horn and the hurried raising of bright signal flags. Whereupon, like a school of dolphins executing a left oblique, but not in the spirit of play, the convoy followed us in executing a sharp 45-degree emergency turn to port. At 8:55 P.M., because of what was reported as an "active contact" and with the same wind instrument for music, we wheeled with equal violence to starboard. Other emergency turns sent us lurching like straphangers at 11:28 P.M. and 11:33 P.M.

From the time we responded to the bugler's Pied Pippings at 5:45 A.M. this morning until the present moment, the day has been as placid as a southern cruise.

If the weather really interests you—and to sailors the weather ought to be even more interesting than it is to elevator men back home—a slight rain fell this morning when most of us were, as usual, struggling to hold our tempers after General Quarters in that interminable daily wait for breakfast. Until after luncheon the ocean proceeded to abandon Union blue for Confederate gray.

Mention of water, fresh or salt, brings me to the laundry. It's quite a laundry we have on board, and the men who work in it work hard and in terrific heat. But as yet they have not perfected the science of sending your best khaki shirt through the wringer so that it does not come back looking like a cross between the face of a Halloween witch and a shrunken apple for which no one in his right senses would bob.

Our laundrymen are generous fellows. Being so generous

DIRTY LINEN

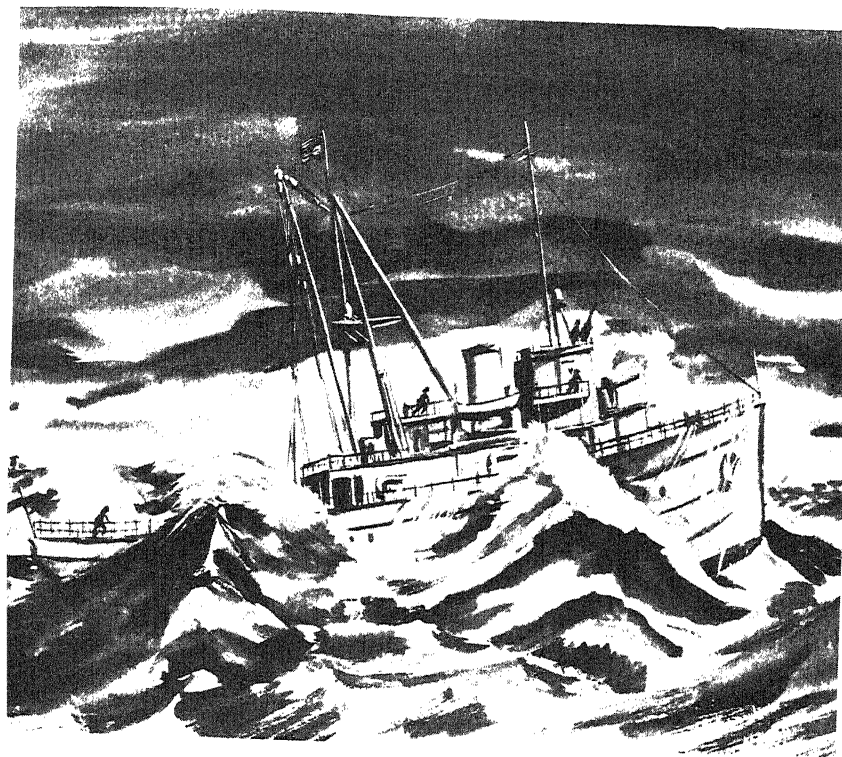
themselves, they naturally appear to think we are their equals in generosity. I gather they do not believe in private property. They are Communists to the extent that they seem to think a community should pool its resources. They show scant respect for our belongings, these laundrymen. They liquidate them in ways ingenious and denuding. Send them your laundry, and ten to one someone else will get a sock of yours. Not two socks at a time; just one. These soapsuds artists have a way of treating our clothes as if they thought we had contributed them to the Community Chest.

They keep us clean, however, even if we are left pantless, sockless, blouseless, and shirtless; and even if overnight they promote us or demote us. Due to their incessant warfare on dirt, we can at least thank them for sparing us the gestures of that southern belle who furnished Ogden Nash with a limerick:

There was a young belle of old Natchez
Whose garments were always in patches,
When comment arose
On the state of her clothes
She drawled, "When Ah itches, Ah scratches."

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*London*) A Rome radio commentator told Italians to stand by for an Allied invasion. "Our men are ready at their guns, our planes are ready, and our sailors are on the watch for the decisive phase approaching," he said. "Every Italian is ready to fight and fight until final victory is achieved." London newspapers yesterday quoted the Rome radio as saying that Allied warships and transports are massing in the Sicilian Strait following the Allied occupation of the tiny island of Lampedusa, the last of the four islands in the channel to be wrested from Italian control. (*Moscow*) The Russians repulsed today another German counterattack, headed by tanks and planes, in the Orel sector. (*Allied Headquarters, North Africa*) The Allied Air Force has again bombed Sicily heavily, centering the fire of block-buster bombs on Messina. (*Chungking*) A fresh success in sweeping back the Japanese invaders from the Upper Yangtze was reported today.



Bostick

Tug o' War

8. *Tug o' War*

There is a venerable story which has to do with one enormous police dog confronting another police dog, equally sizable, but caught in the act of running away as fast as his long legs could carry him from a tiny Pekingese, who was in full pursuit.

"Why in the name of dog heaven should a big brute like you," asks the first police dog, "be running away in terror from that miserable little Pekingese?"

"Don't you know," panted the second police dog, almost exhausted, "that that little Pekingese has the coldest nose in town?"

As a compliment paid by the very large to the prowess of the very small, this has always struck me as being, in its way, something of a perfect tribute. Today, as the sea roughens and some aboard even so commodious and comfortable a ship as the *Spelvin* weaken, it seems appropriate for us to salute those confined in the smaller vessels of our convoy, which are bucking like schizophrenic broncos. Everyone knows what I mean who, through glasses, has watched the destroyers cancaning on the billows, or who this morning after breakfast saw that mail-bearing destroyer come alongside, rolling, pitching, lunging, and in general being as balky as the bridegroom of a shotgun wedding on his marriage day.

The destroyers, though they toss like cookies, were meant to be seagoing. They may lack a sense of balance, yet plainly they have power, these Delilahs of the deep, with their trim, clean, ocean-cleaving lines. The cruisers were born to serve as chamberlains at Neptune's court. And the transports, though heavily laden with human cargo and dipping from time to time like

TUG O' WAR

chunky dowagers attempting to complete a curtsy, were after all intended to put the land behind them.

There is, however, one small, valiant Pekingese along with these larger sea dogs policing the Germans for whom most of us have developed a special fondness. A special admiration, too. I am speaking of the *Bambino*, that tiny, resolute tug which brings up the rear of the column of four ships on the port flank of our convoy.

The *Bambino* was meant to be seagoing from the moment she was a glint in her designer's eyes. There is no doubt about this. She is listed as a seagoing tug, though I doubt if the men who made her ever planned to take her themselves on many voyages at sea. And seagoing, and seaworthy, the *Bambino* has proven herself to be, as she has huffed and puffed along in her brave race to keep with her biggers.

I hear that sometimes she has been gently prodded; barked at from our bridge; barked at possessively as a sheep about to drop behind the fold is barked at by a collie. She has been told she must quicken her pace; step on it; keep up.

The *Bambino* has listened to these warnings, tired though she may have been. She has chugged and churned ahead, and obeyed, regardless of the pain it cost her. She knows, of course, that the laggard in a convoy has a tough time of it. A convoy cannot wait for a sluggard. It must keep on going. The ship which for one reason or another drops out does so at its own risk and must go back alone. Being the solitary bison on this moist range would be no bed of roses.

But since we left That Town—perhaps with this as her unchallengeable incentive—the *Bambino* has kept up with the largest and the stoutest of our ships. If the *Spelvin* recently has gotten her nose wet, think how damp—how permanently damp—the nose of the *Bambino* must have been. And cold. She is about one-thirteenth our size. Not only her Diesel-electric engines but her crew of fifty-five must have been hard-driven and sleepless all these days and nights when some of us aboard the *Spelvin* have been pitying ourselves.

TUG O' WAR

Scuttlebutt has it that the skipper of the *Bambino* is a JG who, during the crossing, has received what the barkeeps know as a full lieutenancy. Whether true or not, this is the kind of story which ought to be true. Come to think of it, the stout little *Bambino* can perhaps best be praised in those words which form the epitaph of Brigham Young, of all people. For, believe it or not, on Brigham Young's tombstone can be found the following amazing, if indisputable, statement: "Here lies Brigham Young—a man of high courage and fine equipment."

Sometime tomorrow and the next day, the *Bambino* and all the rest of the convoy, except the cruiser and the two destroyers which left us on a hush-hush mission this morning, will be passing the Canary Islands, though probably not within seeing distance. A hint as to the whereabouts of the Canary Islands will give you some notion of our approximate position tomorrow. So tighten your belts to receive the blows of some illuminating statistics. The Canaries—I mean the islands—are 600 miles from Dakar, 681 miles from Gibraltar, 774 miles from the Azores, 2453 miles from Natal, 2565 miles from Bermuda, 2965 miles, alas, from New York, and, best of all, 3130 miles from That Town.

A few days ago mention was made of the countless self-appointed, self-anointed prophets who know everything about this war. They even pretend to know when it will end; in other words, when we can go home and live there with our consciences at peace. As all of us want to know when that last whistle will blow, permit me to bring you—it's red-hot off the presses—the final word on the war's conclusion. It comes from an Englishman—Paul Talbot—and has an unanswerable ring to it. Are you ready? Stand by for an important announcement:

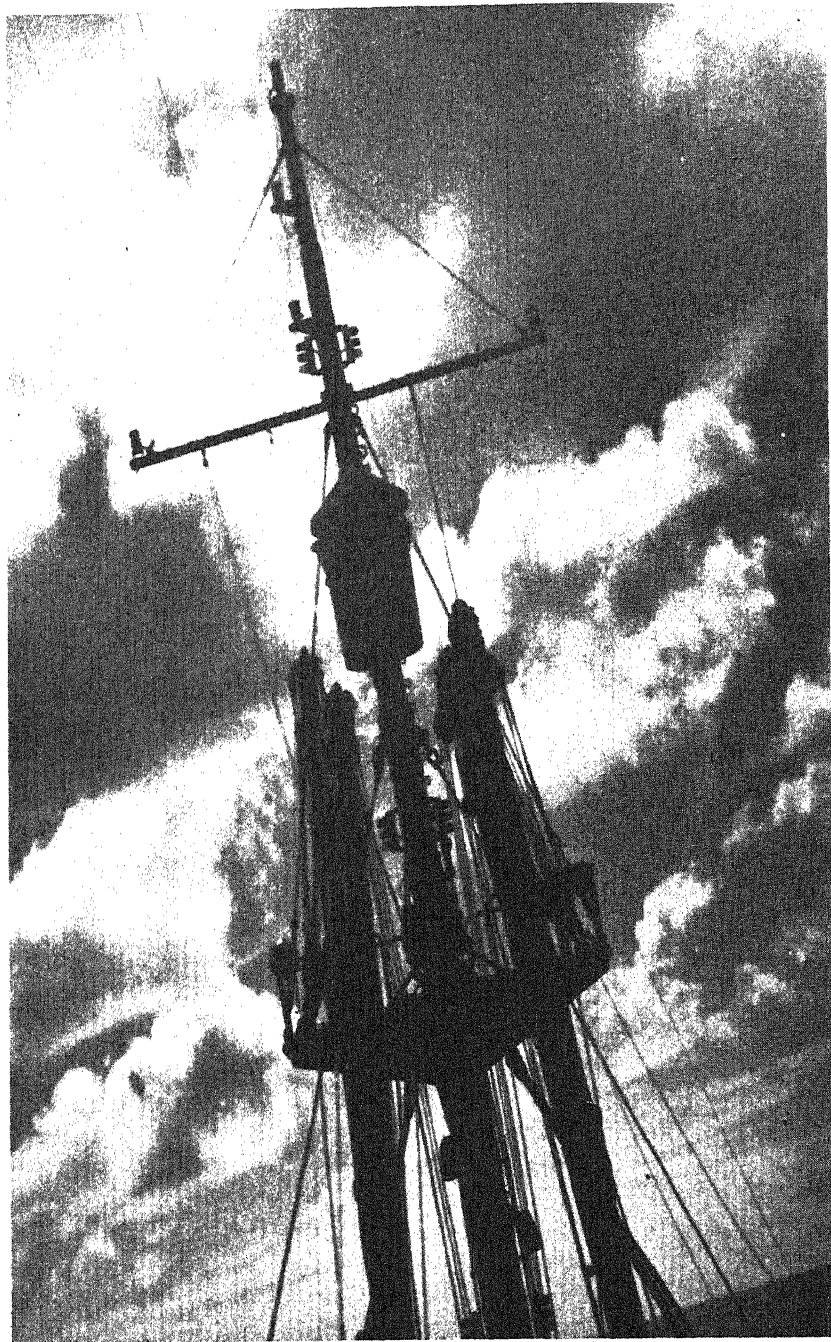
Absolute knowledge have I none
But my aunt's washerwoman's sister's son
Heard a policeman on his beat
Say to a laborer in the street
That he had a letter just last week

TUG O' WAR

Written in the finest Greek
From a Chinese coolie in Timbuktu
Who said that the natives of Cuba knew
Of a colored man in a Texas town
Who got it straight from a circus clown . . .
That a chap way over in Borneo
Said that he had happened to know
Of a sublimated social rake
Whose mother-in-law would undertake
To prove that her husband's sister's niece
Had stated in a printed piece
That she had a son, who had a friend
Who said he knew the war would end.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Allied Headquarters, North Africa*) King George VI of Great Britain has arrived in North Africa while Allied bombers were striking in full force against Sicily. The King visited the United States Fifth Army on Monday, where he was given a demonstration of amphibious tactics. (*Moscow*) The focal point of the dangerous Nazi bulge, seventy-five miles east of Orel, has been hit repeatedly by Soviet bombers carrying heavy loads of high explosives. Well-informed Moscow sources suggested today that Russia's first summer offensive is timed to start simultaneously with an Allied landing in the west. (*London*) A barrage was released in Berlin yesterday of Axis allegations of Allied intrigues designed to bring Turkey into the war, and of constantly growing Allied Naval forces in the central Mediterranean. (*Allied Headquarters, North Africa*) Allied warplanes winging from North Africa and Malta have struck with great force six centers of Axis air power across the scarred face of Sicily. Long-range fighters from the Middle East Command again swept the Aegean Sea. (*Advanced South Pacific Base*) South Pacific Headquarters announced officially on Wednesday that 1337 Japanese planes had been destroyed in this theatre since last July 31. (*Algiers*) Foreshadowing a possible showdown on their political differences, Generals de Gaulle and Giraud last night jointly called a full meeting of the French Committee of National Liberation. (*Chicago*) Secretary Knox declared today that bombing alone would not do. "There is heavy fighting to be done," said the Secretary.



Sunset Silhouette

9. *Proof Through the Night*

Last night gave every promise of being uneventful. It began as a quiet evening. The ocean seemed at peace with the world. The sunset was one of those virtuoso affairs, spectacular enough to make men humble and contemplative.

Everyone leaning against the rails, looking languidly at a sea which never repeats itself, was talking between puffs of things far away. Of what peace would bring. Of what the next few weeks would yield. Of when mail would catch up with us. Of what the past years had brought. Of the contrasts between life in and out of uniform. Of things done, undone, or dreamed of.

Quite a few men were lolling on the decks with books open, living in those private worlds into the hearts of which books run special trains. The usual tinny songs of the Gay Nineties and wheezy radio transcriptions of Camp Show programs were muffling conversation by being trumpeted from the small Victrola on the after end of the boat deck. Some of the steward's mates down near the fantail were strutting their stuff, surrendering to the music and extending it, while others beat time with their hands. In spite of the Victrola, a boy, snug at the bottom of a boat swung just off starboard midships and almost hidden in the blanket in which he had wrapped himself, was sleeping the sleep of the young and the exhausted; that sleep which is so often mistaken for the sleep of the just.

Then suddenly Olsen and Johnson took over. Then suddenly

PROOF THROUGH THE NIGHT

the serenity of another day's end changed into *Hellzapoppin*. What had seemed a damp Arcadia became in a moment a nautical three-ring circus.

The *Spelvin*'s horn—that horn, that anthology of dissonances, that convention hall of deafening grunts, that lady frog's dream of what a bull frog's mating call should be, that groan of groans, that bleat of bleats and blast of blasts—that horn suddenly cleared its throat. Having cleared its throat it found its voice, which is quite a thing to find. The horn, too, must have been enjoying the evening calm. When it released its first shriek, it was a cry of anger; startled, shrill, disconcerted. Thereafter it continued screaming like a giantess about to lose her honor.

Those who at first did not look up from their books, thinking that the horn was just letting off steam—as men and horns will—felt the *Spelvin* quake mildly, sympathetically, unmistakably, and then wondered what had happened. Those who were peering over the starboard rails did not have to ask any questions. They had seen the fountains hurled skywards by the depth charges dropped by a forward destroyer. They had also seen another destroyer swing round pugnaciously and close in on the rumored prey like a dog cornering a rat.

Meanwhile things began to hum on the bridge, where the first reports had come of a "contact" some 1000 yards away. The Admiral, General McLain, the Chief of Staff, and Captain Mather, their dinner just begun and quickly abandoned, had hurried up the ladders. Meanwhile flags fluttered upward from the Signal Bridge like frightened pigeons leaving their roost. And the horn continued its Paul Bunyan croakings.

Meanwhile, too, one of our cruisers had cut rapidly across our bow because of the shift in positions brought about by the swift 45-degree turns the convoy had been executing, and a second cruiser had mobilized for action. Our gun crews, having manned the 5-inch guns fore and aft, hopefully began to sweep the reported danger zone. While the Admiral, bare-headed, calm, and decisive, continued to give his orders, the

PROOF THROUGH THE NIGHT

convoy had changed its course, lining up to port and steaming ahead.

As if all this were not excitement enough—this prompt response to an alarm which must now be set down only as an alarm—the next ring of the three-ring circus went into action.

Two planes from one of our cruisers were due to return. The motors of the first of these could be heard winging homeward. The plane grew from a pinhead in distant clouds over our bow into an SOC above us. Circling over the *Spelvin*, it completed its turn neatly in its cruiser's wake some distance from her square stern and settled on the water with a considerable splash and a good deal of bobbing.

Then the plane tried to taxi within reach of the waiting crane. It had almost reached its goal when its engines conked, as engines will. Little by little the plane slipped astern of the cruiser, wobbling on the waves, growing smaller and smaller, and drifting nearer and nearer to the path of the oncoming transports.

A destroyer steamed up to the stalled plane to offer assistance, while the convoy pushed forward, overtaking and narrowly passing both the plane and the destroyer. The mother cruiser had no choice than to steam ahead for a while. It was waiting for its second plane, which appeared almost at once and was soon secured. Thereafter the cruiser dropped back and out of sight in the thickening dusk to join the destroyer and the plane, which could no longer be seen. But by 8 P.M. she and the destroyer had rejoined the convoy, with both her plane and its fliers safely aboard.

Now for the third ring of this three-ring circus, which turned the hour between 7:30 P.M. and 8:30 P.M. into what even the Brothers Ringling would have to salute as a crowded hour. Our second cruiser, the one which had cut across our bow, had scarcely crossed back to her port position when a destroyer came alongside her to transfer to her the third appendicitis victim to have been swung across a line on a Stokes Stretcher since this Task Force set out from That Town.

PROOF THROUGH THE NIGHT

The boy tucked up in a blanket in the landing boat was seen to move once during all this horn-blasting and commotion. If it is not too un-Navy to say so, he shifted from his left side to his right. But his eyes never opened and his sleep was not disturbed.

During the night excitement again raised its head. It came when most of us were surprised to find ourselves asleep. It came during those few stolen hours of rest which, when they do come, still leave some of us incredulous. Because a good many of us, when we do have any time to think between General Quarters, have decided that sleep and convoy life are things which mix as happily as bromo and seltzer.

This next excitement came appropriately just after midnight—an hour favored by writers, witches, and ghosts as the ideal time for monkeyshines. This particular monkeyshine was at least shrouded in mystery. For then it was that by one of our patrolling destroyers a glowing spot of light was picked up. But the question which must have been agitating to those on the bridge was, why a ship should be lighted on this troubled ocean, which for sweet security's sake demands darkness.

As it neared the distant destroyer's range of vision this ship glistened like a Christmas tree. It was as well lit as many of us would like to be. It turned out to be a hospital ship, presumed to be Spanish, with a Red Cross illuminated on her port side and her decks flooded with light. If this dazzling ship was, as I say, somewhat shrouded in mystery, we as a convoy were also shrouded in smoke. Our fringe of destroyers, taking no chances, had wrapped us up in the kind of blanket which makes Pittsburghers homesick.

At 4:28 P.M. this afternoon even those in their sacks, taking—and needing—their beauty sleep between watches, must have heard the rumblings abdominal from our horn and felt us make another sharp emergency turn when an alarm was sounded from a destroyer on the convoy's starboard quarter. Three ash cans, or depth charges, were subsequently dropped,

PROOF THROUGH THE NIGHT

and their vibrations could be felt internally, by which I do not mean merely inside the *Spelvin*.

At 8 this morning another excitement quickened the pulse of those on the *Spelvin*. Not only on the *Spelvin* but on all attending ships. It was provoked by a single piece of paper; by a dispatch sent out last night to all vessels in this Task Force. This simple dispatch, which will relieve so many aching backs, in addition to reducing soapsuds, brush strokes, and oaths uncountable, merely stated that henceforth dungarees instead of "whites"—clean dungarees, mind you—can be worn openly and without fear of correction by all enlisted men except the messboys when on duty. In other words, enlisted men no longer have to look before sitting down or blush after having done so. No complaints from the enlisted men have so far been registered.

One other, all-important item of news. A bird was sighted today skimming over the water and occasionally landing on it. Birds, of course, mean approaching land, though not the nearest land, which is three miles down. So do planes. Our demon spotters, our Sister Annes of the air, were heartened today, as were many others, to locate a patrolling Liberator at about 7:30 this morning and a Catalina some three hours later. Why these land-based couriers when only water is visible? At noon today we were about 176 miles south of Madeira and about 600 miles from Gibraltar.

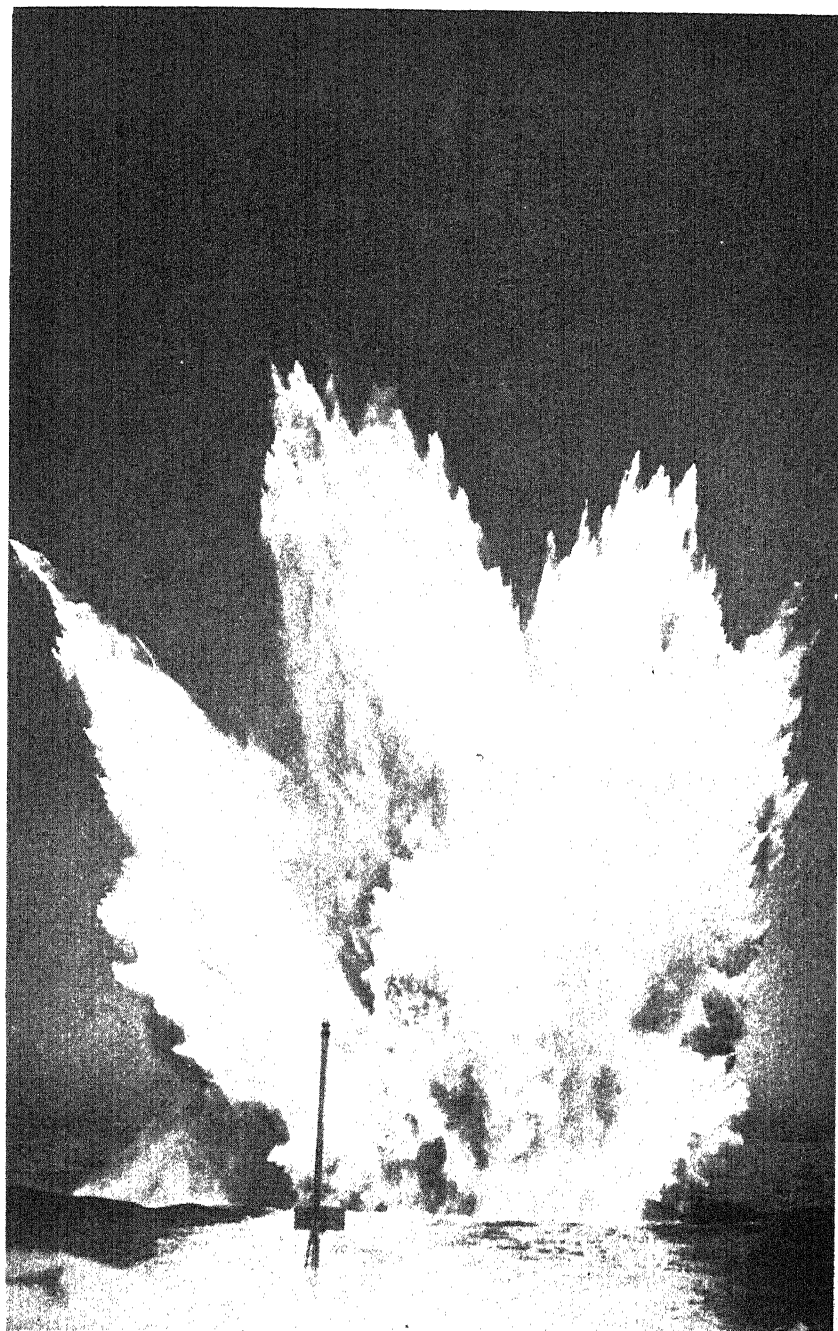
Our date with the Old World draws nearer.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(London) Axis broadcasts continued Friday to speak of Allied Forces in the Mediterranean area and bragged about their plans to repel any landing attempts. The Rome radio, which had previously reported many Allied landing craft concentrating from African coasts towards Pantelleria, declared in a post-midnight broadcast recorded by a British news agency, that large British forces are in the area along the southern frontier of Turkey. (New York) Plans are being made to give rehabilitation aid to the Italian people when they are freed from Nazi domination,

PROOF THROUGH THE NIGHT

according to Herbert H. Lehman, Director of the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations. (*London*) Cologne was pounded Wednesday night for the 116th time by the RAF. (*Washington*) The Navy announced yesterday one of the war's great air victories. It was scored by American airmen over a Japanese air fleet in the South Pacific, when U. S. fighters shot down seventy-seven Jap aircraft over Guadalcanal. (*Madrid*) A dispatch on Thursday said that seventy-five Allied ships, including one battleship, two aircraft carriers, and ten destroyers, were concentrated in Gibraltar's harbor.



Depth Charge

10. *Confessions of a Censor*

Although some of us local soothsayers had a feeling in our seagoing bones that something would happen last night, due to Gibraltar's approaching nearness, nothing did. The night's hours were as quiet as a litter of stillborn mice. Today's events have been equally uneventful. To be sure, at 11 A.M. the horn—that horn—having rested its throat all night so as to be in full voice, did release a terrible blast, and some destroyers on our port side plunged into action. But the "contact" one of these destroyers had reported proved, like so many people, to be a mistake. The exploding depth charges, for which many of us trained our eyes, were not released. The destroyer must have decided it was a school of fish and left them to their lessons. These unreleased depth charges and the tiny Portuguese merchant ship which followed the first alarm by some twenty minutes, were the day's major happenings.

Even so, the *Spelvin* has not been inactive. The knowledge that land comes nearer and nearer has set the letter writers furiously to work. The mere mention of land is catnip to sea-bound correspondents. The mail stacks have begun to pile up since we sighted our first bird. Today's *Liberator* turned these piles into mountains. Accordingly, when other news is scarce, permit one of those wretched creatures who are charged with reading a goodly proportion of these letters to confess not only his sins but what, as he sees it, these letters reveal.

Compared to a man who would sell his grandmother into white slavery a ship's censor may perhaps be entitled to con-



Between Labors and Letters

CONFESSIONS OF A CENSOR

sider himself an honorable man. Yet his lot is not a happy one. He is undone by duty rather than desire.

He is ordered to do what from childhood he has been taught to avoid. His melancholy job is to read other people's letters—stacks of them—daily. Betsy Ross turns him into a snooper, a scanner of secrets, an inkwell eavesdropper, a peruser of cherished intimacies. In the uniform of Farragut he finds himself a Dorothy Dix from whom no advice is expected. He is condemned to being a reader of interrupted serials. Dedicated to liberty, in the interest of its security he must rifle other people's privacies as if he were a Storm Trooper. And he must work, mess, and live the days with men whose party lines he has tapped, pretending (because he cannot forget) that these men are what they would seem to be rather than what they write.

From the mail he has been commanded to intercept, a censor learns much. Not about tactics, strategy, or the *Spelvin's* plans. In their letters both officers and men man other Battle Stations than those to which the sea assigns them. With their pens in hand they fight on the home front. Although as correspondents they differ in style and background, they have much in common. Some are literate, even literary. Others are downed by spelling and trifle with grammar as if it were a trollop. Yet the truest writing to have come out of this war is in these letters.

There are the youngsters, of course, who have no anchors for their feelings. They are the ones who spend their spare moments dashing off descriptions of themselves to unseen and unmet girls far away, in the hope that these girls will write to them. This is their way of confessing their loneliness. There are the small-time Casanovas who circularize whole harems of "dates" with letters as identical as those that the Fat Knight sent to Mistress Page and Mistress Ford. There are the husbands upon whom the fates have smiled because their wives are not censors. Always, however, there is the need for, and the craving for, the affection that waits on shore.

Do not let them fool you. The men who surround you—the frozen-faced officer who grumbles a command, the yeo-

CONFESSIONS OF A CENSOR

man dryly typing out dry dispatches, the signalman indulging in lingual calisthenics on the Signal Bridge, the airman who talks endlessly of nothing but plane identification, the soldier who is mastering Navy terms, or the gob whose language betrays a talent for anatomy—these men are not as hard-boiled as they would like to be thought. There is much more to them than meets the ear, and this is what meets the censor's eyes.

They carry the land with them to sea. They carry their hopes, their memories, their affections, and their peacetime ideals, too. The roster of the *Spelvin* includes only one half of the men who are aboard her. It records the ship's complement as it reveals itself in public, not as it thinks and feels in private. Whether these men's letters begin "Dearest Mom," "Dear Dad," "Darlingest," "Hiya Toots," "Honey Bunch," or "Brother Jim," they have more encouraging comments to make on mankind than even William Saroyan, that little St. Francis from Fresno, would dare to dream of at his most hopeful.

The writers of these letters do not like war. "This bloody mess," "this ugly business," they call it. They are wondering about their crops and livestock back home. They want to know what has happened to the gang they used to play around with; to their wives, to their children, or their parents, friends, or fiancées. They ask no pity and discourage all worry. They want to get the whole thing over with as soon as possible.

To the ammunition the *Spelvin* carries, add these men's recollections of what they have had, and their dreams of what they will have again. These must be listed among the ship's stoutest weapons. The one consolation of being a censor is that from a job so questionable one learns unquestionably that men are better either than they think they are or are willing to admit.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Washington*) The Navy Department revealed today that a unified invasion force, hand-picked from the Army and Navy, is being trained in bases along both coasts. The Pacific Division is under Rear Admiral Francis Rockwell, who directed the land-

CONFESSIONS OF A CENSOR

ings at Attu. The Atlantic Force is under Rear Admiral Alan Kirk. The Navy says thousands of Naval officers and men have learned to take new landing boats and amphibious craft through heavy surf to landing beaches and thousands of toughened Army troops have learned operations by repeated practice under simulated battle conditions. (*Berne*) The German overseas radio claimed today that twelve Allied landing barges, mounted with cannon fore and aft, have arrived at Gibraltar. The Nazi radio added that two aircraft carriers, two battleships, and twelve British and United States destroyers, and a few merchant vessels, were also at Gibraltar. (*London*) According to rumors spreading throughout Algiers Italian peace missionaries, including Prince Umberto, were in the French African capital. (*London*) The Air Ministry described the RAF's June 11 attack on Düsseldorf as "the most shattering blow to the German war potential which has so far been struck in the battle of the Ruhr."

11. *Black Rock, Blue Water*

Quite a day, as even Mrs. Roosevelt would have to admit! We have spied the Atlas Mountains and the Dark Continent hidden behind hot, early-morning clouds. Cape Spartel, the Bay of Tangier, and the city of Tangier, one by one have slipped within our vision. We have come within thinking distance of Cape Trafalgar and those near-by waters where Lord Nelson aboard the *Victory* helped to change the course of history, and where another dictator—Napoleon—saw his dreams of conquest shrink.

We have sailed over those narrows, now known as the Straits of Gibraltar, which in prehistoric times were dry land. We have floated for a while in stately columns of twos where once the savage animals of Africa roamed into primeval Europe. We have edged past Point Tarifa where the Moors imposed levies upon foreign merchants and from which that good old Republican word—tariff—is derived. It was to Point Tarifa, you may recall, that Hannibal crossed when, with those first tanks, his elephants, he was to take the long, slow road to Rome, which led over the Alps and to defeat.

We have had a long, memorable view of Gibraltar. We have seen that rock of empire rising from the sea with its series of Great Stone Faces seemingly superimposed one above the other. Gibraltar has today resisted the siege of our curious naked eyes, and of our binoculars, too. She has kept her secrets and kept us guessing as to the series of hidden fortifications which eat like termites into her limestone body to give it power.

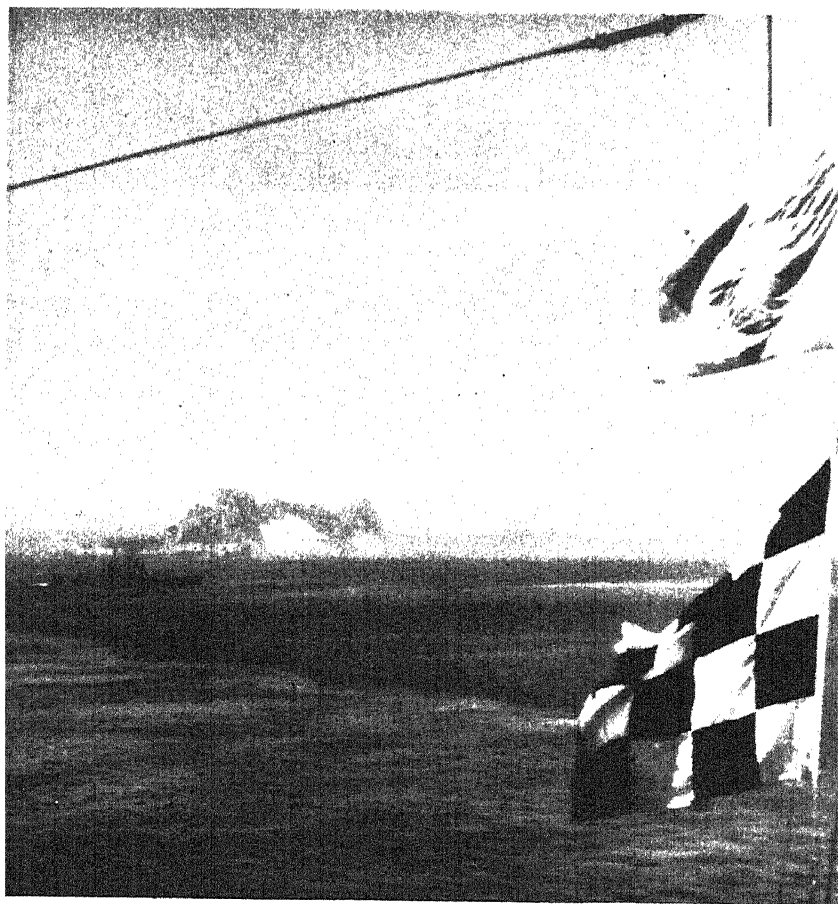
BLACK ROCK, BLUE WATER

Gibraltar has risen to our port side, a British sphinx at the base of Spain; the Mediterranean's open sesame; and a guarantee of our safe passage into the new-old waters and the new-old world which for most of us lie ahead.

At Gibraltar we had a hard time distinguishing the gun emplacements and the hideaways of those vigilant and well-armed cliff dwellers who keep the Rock impregnable. We have watched the many friendly planes circling above us. We have seen the battleships clustered in that distant harbor, huddled to the rear of the fortress's Atlantic face. We have recognized the outlines of the cranes in the busy naval base which confronts this harbor. We have heard the far-off thunder of Gibraltar's antiaircraft guns, when today those guns fired, even as we have known our guns to fire, at a sleeve towed by a friendly plane. We have also seen that great concrete water catcher which, on Gibraltar's Mediterranean flank, fills the rocks as if it were a crown wedged in a giant's molar.

Perhaps we saw the light signal being flashed at us from well up on the Rock's seaward side. And noted the lighthouse below the first precipice we passed. Perhaps we gradually realized that, tucked below the Rock—seemingly so uninhabitable—were the roofs and outlines of a town. For that town, for the men who live in it, for Gibraltar herself, for the guns which make her strong, for the England which has fortified and held her and which preceded us and Russia in opposing Hitler, today we can only be grateful.

Yes, gentlemen, quite a day, with more men to be seen crowding the *Spelvin's* decks than anyone had suspected were aboard. A full house, a bulging house, with the Standing Room Only sign put out. And the beginning of a new chapter for us all. That sense of a new chapter made itself felt with the first sounds of Reveille. Because this morning, in the groggy darkness of General Quarters, the smell of land was in the air. Even in the moonlight the air was warmer. The chill of ocean winds had gone. A lazy, gentle breeze was blowing; a breeze land-based and fragrant.



Gibraltar's Mediterranean Flank



African Coast Line

BLACK ROCK, BLUE WATER

Some swore this breeze was scented with a Spanish aroma—with the bouquet of old sherry, with the velvet cloaks of vanished grandees, with mantillas, castanets, and bullfights, with roses tucked invitingly in the teeth of roadside Carmens, and with the unforgotten sacrifice of Spain's revolutionaries. Others differed, insisting the breeze was more African than Spanish, and above all Moroccan in its flavor. They were pleased to find traces of Hedy Lamarr in it—an argument calculated to capture the fancy of many, even if in so doing it hit below the belt. The chief virtue of the breeze was neither its warmth nor perfume. It was the simple fact that it came from land, any land. The sunrise, seeming to sense this, celebrated the occasion by breaking out into color like a signal bridge on wash day.

We have been less than Noah's time at sea. Yet these many days were a long pull, especially in wartime. Some aboard the *Spelvin* were undoubtedly as cheered by glimpsing the Atlas Mountains this morning as the Ark's zoo keeper and skipper must have been when his water-wearied eyes spotted Mount Ararat.

There's more water in the Atlantic than lookouts can see. There's far more water in the Atlantic than many had suspected; infinitely more water than the boys fresh from their ol' swimming holes had guessed. There's more water in the Atlantic than our shakedown cruises in home waters had hinted at or than the biggest maps suggest. The Atlantic is a wet, wet place; even wetter than That Town we sailed from.

There were dangers prowling these ocean waters; dangers which need not be nameless. While we have been crossing, enemy submarines have been patrolling the Atlantic singly or in marauding packs. If the Nazis had had their way, they would have greeted us warmly. It is our high good fortune that we missed their welcoming committees. And these committees were lucky to miss us. We have had our alarms and plenty of them, as the *Spelvin's* horn can testify. But, as Captain Mather puts it, we have managed to make an end run

BLACK ROCK, BLUE WATER

around such U-boats as may have been looking for us. And some have been.

During these long days and nights on the Atlantic (if you have been able to tell the two apart) I think all of us have become aware of a change in the feeling we have toward one another on the *Spelvin*. Our feeling is friendlier—not to everyone, of course, because we have not lost all our standards; nor, thank God, has Pollyanna bobbed up as a stowaway. Still the feeling is friendlier, palpably so. We have done nothing about this. The welding has taken place unconsciously through our knowledge of what might have happened and of what still lies ahead.

William Hazlitt, the great English essayist, once pointed out that we pamper the little griefs into great ones and bear the great ones as well as we can. "A lump of soot spoiling a man's dinner," said he, and "a plate of toast falling in the ashes . . . have led to serious and almost tragical experiences." But, bothered as we can be by trifles, we can rise to larger challenges. "The magnitude of the events in which we happen to be concerned," wrote Hazlitt, "fills the mind and carries it out of itself. Our thoughts are expanded with the scene on which we have to act. Some men are as indifferent to a stroke of fate, as before and after an earthquake there is a calm in the air."

That we are concerned with events of great magnitude, no one can deny. Geography and our fates have an appointment with each other.

Our appointment with geography should take us tomorrow morning towards —. Of course, you have guessed. Scuttlebutt has long since filled in the blank. Our appointment with geography should—I say *should*—take us tomorrow morning to a North African port.

There has been a very valid reason for withholding the announcement of our first (mark you, our first) destination. Something could easily have happened to us on the way over. If that something had happened; if any of us, as survivors, had been picked up by a U-boat and cross-examined as only the

BLACK ROCK, BLUE WATER

Germans can cross-examine their prisoners, our knowledge of our destination would only have made things harder for us—for all of us and the waiting force we are to join.

Among prisoners of war there is always a percentage of men who break down under the agony of cross-examination and tell everything they know. It stands to reason that what men do not know they cannot tell. Hence, in the interests of security rather than of secrecy (more accurately, in the interest of your own possible well-being), rumors as to where we were going have been neither denied nor confirmed. But now that you are in on this secret, we ask you to guard it jealously, just in case, you understand, just in case. . . . Now to the world news, of which this Task Force's journey is an as yet unheralded part. . . .

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*London*) The German radio reported today that an Allied fleet has assembled off the Syrian coast and is prepared to steam into action in the Aegean Sea. (*Chungking*) The capture of four strategic points along the Kutu River in the battle of the upper Yangtze was announced by the Chinese High Command on Sunday. (*London*) A German news agency claimed that members of the Russian General Staff are in Gibraltar. (*New Delhi*) General Auchinleck assumed his post Sunday as Commander-in-Chief in India, succeeding Field Marshal Wavell, who has been appointed Viceroy. (*Moscow*) Germans attempting to attack Russian positions on the Orel ridge, 110 miles northwest of Kharkov, sustained heavy losses when they were repulsed by Soviet Forces. (*U.S.S. Spelvin*) From 6 o'clock this evening and until arrival in port all personnel on the weather decks will wear steel helmets. The evening alert will start tonight at sunset.

12. *All the Perfumes*

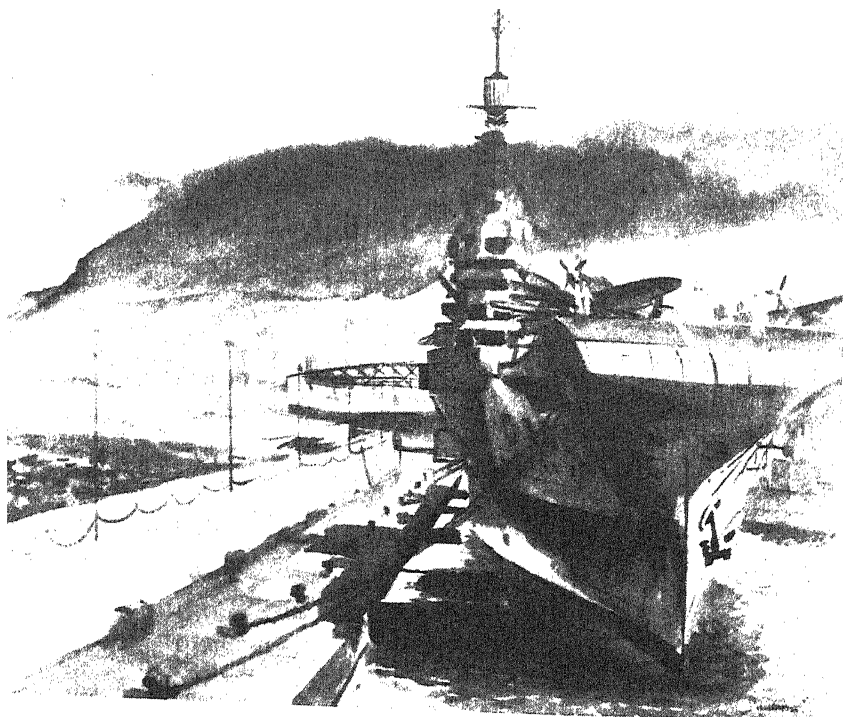
Exactly eight days ago, having given Gibraltar a respectful gander and been gaped at ourselves by Hitler only knows how many enemy peepers from the Spanish shore, we had crossed the Mediterranean, mostly at night, to sight those steep mountains which jostle skyward to form the African coast line.

We first sighted these mountains at 8:20 in the morning. As we proceeded landwards, the Californians aboard the *Spelvin* felt happy. It does not take much to make a Californian think of California. It takes less to make him talk about it. For the Californian all roads lead to the Golden Gate, and the Golden Gate is always ajar.

As we came closer to this North African port, still maintaining from its details and its fragrances what even at Annapolis would be recognized as a respectful distance, the *Spelvin's* Rose Bowlers and Sunset Boulevardiers grew the more nostalgic. Of course, we have had only one or two mild rains since we have been tied up. Still, anyone who has flown from San Francisco to San Diego must have recognized certain sun-kissed features in the oncoming coast.

The point of travel you might think would be to get away from home; to rejoice in the strange; to delight in the different. Yet most people carry their homes with them when they move about, as turtles tote their shells. Instead of being grateful for a change, they resent it.

The further we penetrated into the outer harbor of this North African port, the less like California what we were seeing became. For example, consider Monsieur L'Altère, the



Vaiksnoras

North African Harbor

ALL THE PERFUMES

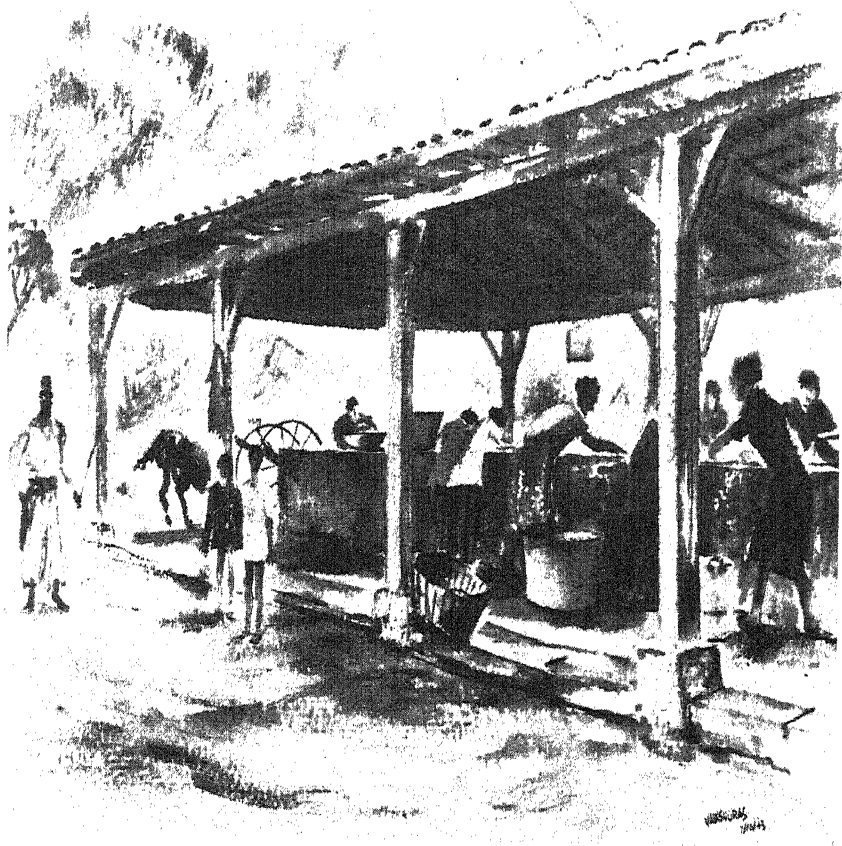
pilot, who took us in. He was as French as the tricolor his small boat flew. With his battered gray hat encircled by a black band, with his blacker eyes and their world-weary twinkle, with his sharp face not so much tanned as rusted by the weather, like a discarded razor blade, with his violently striped suit, his Raymond Duncan sandals, his nervous hands tapping behind his back, and his eloquent dictionary of shrugs, he was someone—and something—not to be found in San Diego. Or Boston, Portland, Norfolk, New York, or Corpus Christi, for that matter.

Then, as we crossed toward the jetty we could see the buildings pueblo-ed against the mountains. They still could not be inhaled. And the people who scent them were still unseeable. Even so, their architecture was different. Nothing Maine boasts, La Jolla knows, or that New Jersey, Texas, or Oklahoma has produced is like them.

For those ill at ease (hence lost, hence resentful) on alien shores, there were a few comforting reminders of home. The two Liberty ships, for instance, in the nest of tankers outside the harbor. The harbor itself, as crammed with American ships as a mince pie is with raisins. The sign reading "Standard" even if the "Oil" was missing. The American trucks waiting to be fed by American gasoline on shore. The jeeps scurrying everywhere. And Captain Mitchell, who had flown over, waiting to welcome us on the jetty when we had passed the protecting buoys and come into the harbor. All these were sights to soften the blow, to lessen the impact of the foreign.

In those long days since the ships of our Task Force first clustered here, most of us have been given our "liberty" ashore. Some of us, after the first visit, decided we preferred death. Yes, after the first contact, many of us began to change our tune even about That Town, our port of departure. "Dear old —," we began to sigh. "Maybe we misjudged it."

"Believe you me, Ma," not a few were inclined to write home, and might have done, had the censor been allowed to pass it, "I never felt so proud of being an American as when



Vaiksnoras

Street Scene

ALL THE PERFUMES

I saw this place. Its streets aren't clean the way ours are in Waco. It doesn't look a bit like South Bend. We've got taller buildings in Missoula.

"You ought to see the bathrooms in the hotels. It's a dirty place, all right. It smells to high heaven, Ma. And its people—the Arabs especially—are both dirty and smelly. The people do the strangest things, Ma, the most intimate things, right in the streets, just like dogs do.

"Then they've got no coffee shops or Automats or nice restaurants here, Ma. I don't know what I'd have done if it hadn't been for the Red Cross. The Doc says almost anything Americans eat here in the native joints will give them dysentery.

"The liquor's lousy, too, Ma. It may be fermented when they make it, but it keeps right on fermenting after you take it. And the girls, Ma. Some of them carry their bedding right around with them and keep the sheets tucked up around their eyes as if it was winter, which it ain't. And the older people are so dumb, they can't speak English, except when discussing money. Yes, Ma, this place (if only I could name it in my letters) is the burg awful. Believe you me, I now know what it means to be an American."

Whatever we may have wanted to write home in this vein (had the censor been willing) would have been true enough the first time we saw this port. It would have remained true the second time, at least most of it, and would be no less true twelve months from now. But the fairer way of judging it—I mean fairer to ourselves no less than to it—would be to judge it not by Pittsburgh but by Algiers or Casablanca. It would seem more reasonable to compare likes with likes and to avoid the fatal mistake of trying to arrive at the truth by mixing categories.

Let's grant it is a dump, because it is so most certainly when judged by Algiers. Not all of it is a dump, however, and even the dumpiest parts should be of interest to visiting Americans, so long as they are only anchored here, because of what can be found everywhere here and cannot be found at all at home.

ALL THE PERFUMES

Let's admit the houses are mainly poor Moorish and tenth-rate Parisian. Let's admit that Algiers, with its bursts of bougain-villaea, its palms, its mimosa, its better architecture and finer harbor, is to this place what apple pie is to the piece of cheese which goes with it.

But push away from the squares filled with American soldiers and sailors; wander into the narrow side streets; roam along the waterfront; study the anthology of races—French, Arabs, British, Dutch, and American—now infesting the place; remember to do your eating on the *Spelvin*; and forget about our plumbing, which, with its regurgitant and polished wonders, finds us Americans so frightened by the Crane estate that our Rotarianism can sink to unplumbed depths—and perhaps at second or third sight we will come to feel a little less bitterly about the dump which is this port.

Certainly the coast line, though somewhat lacking in color save for the inkburst which is the Mediterranean, is fine. Certainly few views are more magnificent than is the one to be had from that shrine on the mountain astern below the French fort now bulging with German and Italian prisoners. The swimming in the coves and from the beaches is as inviting as the coast line. So, apparently, are the Army Nurses stationed there.

Were the *Spelvin* still "unsealed" and the port within our visiting limits, I had planned today to turn Polonius on the agitating subject of what to do with Moslem women. In case you did not know, I had official advice to offer of a bees-and-flowers variety of which the State Department would have approved. I was going to say something, of course, about our being ambassadors of good will. But, as the ship is sealed, perhaps it is wiser to let bygones be bygones. Accordingly, I will side-pass sex for the moment and even fail to keep the Burton Holmes fires burning in this travelogue.

Everyone on the *Spelvin* will remember the plane lost by one of our attending cruisers in the mid-Atlantic. Everyone will also recall the anxiety of those hours when the search for

ALL THE PERFUMES

the pilot and the observer was still in progress. And the pang we felt when all hope for these men was abandoned. The good news for today is that the two men have been found. They landed safely on the water, where they kept afloat for ten days, without apparently having to nibble off sea gulls or an albatross in the Rickenbacker manner. They still had four days' food and water supply when, by a miracle, they were picked up by a convoy headed the other way.

Now for some bad news. No doubt all of you have heard of the boy from one of our transports who dove or slipped onto the rocks below from the high cliff which edges the cove at the jetty's end. He died that evening, one of those wasteful, avoidable, and ironic deaths which just now seem even more ironic than they do in peacetime. On the same evening another sailor, picked up by one of our jeep drivers and obviously in a troubled mental state, tussled first with the driver when he tried to restrain him, then with some soldiers, and finally dashed to his death over a near-by cliff.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(Algiers) Allied Headquarters, North Africa, reported today that on Sunday night railroad yards at San Giovanni in southern Italy were bombed. Daylight raids were made on Monday by Flying Fortresses. (U.S.S. *Spelvin*) To prevent bomb blasts from breaking your neck, be sure to eliminate the web chin strap from your steel helmet and use the leather strap instead. (Ottawa) The British High Commissioner revealed at a press conference yesterday that one German submarine had been sunk each day during the past two weeks. (London) A formation of large Allied bombers, identified by coastal observers as Flying Fortresses, swept across the Channel toward France at 9 P.M. Tuesday night. An hour earlier several waves of Allied aircraft had also crossed the Channel.

13. *The Sealed Ship*

When we slipped by the Pillars of Hercules; when the Atlantic was behind us and the Mediterranean splashed our bow, I think we all realized we had reached a new chapter in this adventure which is at once ours, our country's, and the world's.

All of us had our reasons for going into the services. The fact that we chose or were chosen is only a part of the machinery which got us here. All of us have our reasons just now for being inwardly happy; yes, happy in spite of the separations and the losses, both professional and personal, that we have had to endure; happy in spite of the threatening days so near at hand; happy because as men we find ourselves included within the parenthesis of our own times. In our hearts we know that we could not have expected to share in the future unless we had shared in this unmerry and appalling present.

When I mention the advantages we gain by sharing in the present I do not mean those vulgar advantages I may seem to mean. I do not mean the low professional or political gains which may be ours because we happen to have been in uniform in the right places at the proper times. I do not mean the *camaraderie* of the legionnaire-in-convention-met which may yet be our fate. I do not mean those tall and ever-growing tales we will have to tell, which will serve our grandchildren as sedatives. I mean the simple satisfaction we will always have, so long as we have life, of having been included emotionally and experientially in the major challenge of our time; of having tried to play our fractional parts; of being able to enjoy the pleasanter world we trust will emerge from all this regrettable

THE SEALED SHIP

horror, with that pleasure which is ours when, after panting up a difficult mountain, we look down on the valley beneath us and relish an earned view.

Our first common military experience came when we entered our various services. Chapter One in this adventure was our indoctrination. This included the reluctant losing of our civilian identities; the pangs, the pains, the absurdities, the humiliations, and the violent readjustments of those far-off days of transition and transplanting.

Chapter Two for many of us began at That Town when we met as sailors, soldiers, and marines; as men meant to go overseas; as members of one Amphibious Task Force trained in many aptitudes.

Our third chapter was the Atlantic; the period of our growing used to the sea; of growing used to the ship; used to lost privacies, a new mode and routine of life, and our sea-borne duties; yes, and of our growing used to one another. It was the period of becoming accustomed, beneath the crossing's outward and cruiselike calm, to living quite normally in the presence of ever-lurking dangers. It was then, when so much might have happened and so little did, that Battle Stations ceased to be a phrase and became a habit. It was then we learned that watches were not necessarily trinkets made in Switzerland and that all Life Savers were not meant to be eaten.

Chapter Four was opened by Gibraltar; opened, more accurately, by the Mediterranean; by the realization all of us then had of having completed the first long, dreamlike phase of our purposeful journey. As the narrow Straits widened to admit us to a landlocked sea, bounded by history new and old, steeped in grudges ancient and modern, and edged only by foreign powers, we both knew and felt that we had left the joys of the New World and had come abruptly into the shadow of the Old World's problems. We knew, in short, that we were moving into the inner ring of the real war zone; the zone of war where not only submarines surface but where armies clash, where death is a commonplace each day, where enemy planes



Inspection of Task Force
*Admiral Kirk, General Patton, General Alexander,
Lieutenant Hope, and General McLain*



Admiral Kirk Decorated by the Press

*The Admiral is made an honorary member of the Atlantic Fleet
War Correspondents' Association. John Moroso of the AP pins
on the ribbon*

THE SEALED SHIP

darken the skies, where enemy navies have fought it out, and where civilians living in cathedral towns enjoy no immunity.

This present chapter—the African chapter, or Chapter Five if we must be faithful to our table of contents—is a chapter which the writers of mystery stories might dub “The Sealed Ship.” It began agreeably enough, this chapter of suspense, with those first tourist impressions even a war cannot curtail. Then came the maneuvers which were inescapable reminders of why we should have been taken on this particular ferry ride. They went so badly one can only hope that in war, as in the theatre, a poor dress rehearsal may mean a successful first night. Now, after having returned to this crowded harbor and had more liberties, we find ourselves a sealed ship, surrounded by sealed ships, in a Force that is likewise sealed.

What does a sealed ship mean? Ask the man who wants to go ashore but who has no official reason for being there. Ask the man who has official business ashore but who has not yet obtained the temporary orders needed for him to be able to leave the ship. They know, these men. So do we all.

It means we are reaching the point in this particular chapter when it is thought advisable for us—as a group—to break off communications with the shore. No one has to pucker his brow too deeply to understand the implications of such a move. We are coming closer and closer, however slowly, to the day of days. When that day will be, few of us know. Certainly I do not.

But watch the high Army and Naval officers filing into the Admiral’s cabin for conferences the whole day through and late into the night. Observe the doors in the passageways closed on grave conferences. Note the increased intensity with which the daily Battle Problems are attacked. Through the open doors and the smoke of cigars, cigarettes, and pipes, notice the officers riding chairs bronco-wise, huddling on berths, poring over maps, and either reading or writing reports. Observe the hum of activity in the Intelligence Section as maps, documents, and final instructions are assembled. Realize how day and

THE SEALED SHIP

night, night and day the men in the Photo Lab have been laboring to prepare their maps. See how the official pouches begin to bulge. Pass the yeomen above, struggling to uncrate and carry the huge relief maps to their proper places.

Listen to the thud of our troops as they have marched alongside on the jetty, waiting there patiently in the heat and in the darkness to be herded across the *Spelvin* to the ship tied up next to us. Look at the troops crowding the other sealed ships near us. Overhear your neighbor's talk or your own heart. Consult either your calendar or your common sense (in this case both are equally eloquent and undeniable), and you are bound to realize that our being sealed means only one thing. The as yet un-lived sixth chapter of this particular amphibian adventure comes nearer and nearer. Our A-B-C days are drawing to an end; our "D" day is approaching.

That when this day does arrive the movements of this Task Force may eventually get out to the world is proven by the numbers of war correspondents and photographers who have recently been for-gathering on the *Spelvin*. The Army and the Navy realize the value both of news and photographic coverage. As a rule, they are not like the uniformed little twerp, anchored to a spittoon in a North African port, who, when asked where the war correspondents could file their stories, said, "War correspondents? File their stories? Don't you know we are much too busy fighting a war to bother with that kind of stuff?"

The newsmen and the photographers are walking delegates for the American Public, which, since it contributes both the men and the money that make the show possible, has the right as well as the desire to know what is going on. These men, armed only with their typewriters and their cameras, are the liaison officers between technical operations of the most delicate sort and public opinion, which can be no less delicate. That they happen to be the forward echelon of history, writing their annals in the heat of events, is also in their favor.

Due to the correspondents attached to this Force, our fami-

THE SEALED SHIP

lies should find it easy to follow at the proper time in such private places as the public prints, the magazines, and newsreels, those doings of ours which censorship forbids us mentioning individually.

The Richard Harding Davis type of correspondent belongs to a remote age. And the Clark Gable motion picture type of correspondent is a newspaperman not yet known to anyone except movie-goers.

The war correspondent or war photographer today is a hard-working fellow in uniform. He is a man of writing skill or camera mastery who is blessed (or cursed) with a love of adventure which lands him in the hottest spots at the hottest times. His courage can be infinite; his readers almost as numerous as the dollars in the national debt.

This Force has with it its full quota of upper-bracket correspondents and photographers; men who have won the confidence both of their editors and readers by following more wars into more danger zones than most regulars ever see. The great news agencies—the Associated Press, the United Press, and the International News Service—are represented. Needless to say, they reach every township in America. Some of our outstanding magazines are also present and accounted for—*Time* and the *Saturday Evening Post*. These correspondents have been distributed among our ships on the way over. Then, of course, we have had with us cameras clicking for the Newsreel Roto Pool and for the two official Navy camera crews, of four each, aboard two of the destroyers which were our escorts. The Coast Guard has had its staff photographer on our one Coast Guard transport. And on the *Spelvin*, ever avid in the pursuit of doings photogenic, is Lieutenant Schneider with his assistants.

Just a brief word about the Shirers and the Quentin Reynoldses of this particular Task Force, so that should you spy one of them striding up our gangplank you may identify him and write home to confess, "Mother, I have seen a newspaperman." Aboard the *Spelvin* a fellow-traveler, as they say in

THE SEALED SHIP

rosier circles, is Clark Lee. He is the INS man; the author of *They Call It Pacific*; the big, burly fellow with the ink-black hair and the amused eyes, who never goes to bed except by day and prowls the ship when not working at night. The slim, thin-faced, dark-haired young man is John Mecklin of the UP, which is not a command but an abbreviation for the United Press. The hearty, talkative, lean fellow without a hungry look is the Associated Press's John Moroso. You can spot him by his sound, which is a pleasant one, and by that green band which flashes on his left arm when conversationally he is indulging in some dapper bayonet work on an oncoming German.

Frequently with us is a heavy-set young man with a southern accent calculated to bend a butter knife. He is George Sessions Perry, novelist, short story writer, and now a journalist representing the *Saturday Evening Post*. If you happen to come within listening range of Mr. Perry's sweet-potato voice, be sure to find some excuse for overhearing him, because he is as witty as he is shy, and exudes both thoughts and speeches which are picturesque. Lastly, as Father Ballinger might say, one of our visiting correspondents is Reginald Ingraham of *Time*. He is a plumpish, adult teddy bear of a man, with twinkling black eyes, black hair which can never have been silver-streaked by worry, and a disposition to make Father Divine look to his laurels.

The point is, gentlemen, that in the opinion of the Army, the Navy, and the American Public, you are newsworthy.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*London*) British Fighter Command Aircraft damaged three medium-sized freighters and four mine-sweepers in an attack on a German convoy off the Hook of Holland yesterday, the Air Ministry News Service has announced. (*London*) Secretary of State Cordell Hull confirmed today yesterday's radio report that Admiral Georges Robert, French High Commander, on Martinique, had been forced to accept American intervention as

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a solution to that island's difficulties. (*Allied Headquarters, North Africa*) American Flying Fortresses, carrying forward a ceaseless attack upon Sicily, hit Palermo on Wednesday, scattering debris throughout that island capital and main Sicilian port. Palermo was described Thursday by returning American airmen as "about finished." There was almost no opposition from enemy fighters this time, General Eisenhower's communiqué announced yesterday. (*Washington*) Powerful American sea and air forces beat off Japan's first air counterattack on the Solomons, the Navy Department announced yesterday. At the same time an American victory was scored on the New Georgia Islands, where at least sixty-five Japanese planes, or half the enemy's attacking force, were destroyed. (*Chungking*) The Chinese High Command announced yesterday that Chinese forces had checked the Japanese reinforcement seeking to relieve their troops in encircled Owchikow.

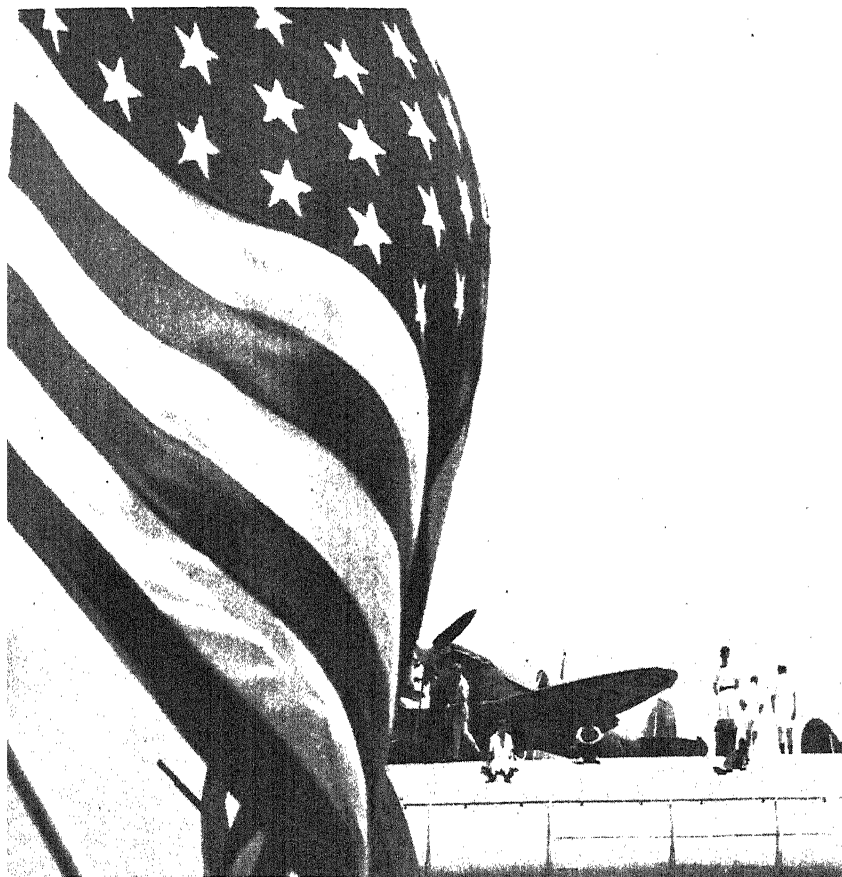
14. *We Happy Few*

Time just now means very little to any of us. One day slips into another as continuous as a snake's hips. Is it Tuesday, Saturday, June 28 or July 1? Only our calendars do not forget; our calendars and the Higher-Ups.

A quick glance at my own calendar reminds me that tomorrow is July 4. Now July 4 is a special day which has left few men speechless. By national custom and historic practice, only a few drops from a sea of upturned faces are needed on the Fourth to inspire someone to release an ocean of words. Almost since Washington lost his cherry tree, certainly since the Signers met to put their John Hancocks to those blazing words about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, which only yesterday Mr. Winston Churchill was wrongly attributing to the Constitution, American bipeds standing up on the Fourth of July have faced American bipeds sitting down on that same day, and made the eagle scream by plucking it as if it were a goose.

I cannot help remembering at such a time, when—thank God—the British are our friends, when we—thank God—are theirs, and when two of His Majesty's warships are gathered peaceably in our midst, how smileable are the twists of history.

I promise not to mention a certain tea party at this late date. Those old feuds are now at best irrelevancies. What matters most to nations as well as men is not what *was*, but what *is*, and what *will be*. Even these feuds, as we now look back on them, have doubtless benefited both us and the British in clearing the way for the stubborn, uphill fight for those Freedoms,



United Nations—A British Carrier Off Our Fantail

WE HAPPY FEW

vague but beckoning, which once again find us fighting as Allies.

So much have times changed, so surprised a mother can a new necessity be, that I remember reading, not without smiling, two summers ago in a Boston paper (of all places) that the Daughters of the American Revolution would celebrate the Fourth of July in Boston by giving a tea party for Bundles for Britain.

Tomorrow, three Georges later than that other George who set the tea a-brewing in Boston's harbor, we will be celebrating with the British another Fourth of July in a place where not many of us ever expected to find ourselves. Think back to your other Fourths, use them as milestones to the part of the world in which you now are; remember the long week ends they represented, the lazy morning rests, the joy riding in those days when motorists as well as orators still had their full supply of gas; recall the dances at the country club, the fire-crackers, the sparklers, the Catherine wheels, the Roman candles, the deafened elders, the swims, the picnics, the tennis games, the heat, the drinks, and the personal independence of those unforgotten Fourths—and none of us can avoid asking ourselves why tomorrow should be so different for us all.

In the first shock of contrast some might be tempted to surrender to that disillusionment so exquisitely phrased in "Dover Beach." It was in this poem, in as profound a moment of despair as man has known, that Matthew Arnold wrote:

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! For the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And here we are as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight
Where ignorant armies clash by night.



War Cargo

WE HAPPY FEW

Without putting on blinders, without draping ourselves in bunting, and looking straight into the sun, most of us, on second thought or third thought and on every thought thereafter, would find it impossible to share in this despair, however memorable its phrasing, however frequent its temptation. At least, not just now. Let me try to explain why.

Memories of other Fourths may appear to confuse the issue. Every one of us must recall how from year to year we have been cautioned, commanded, begged to celebrate "a safe and sane Fourth of July."

What about tomorrow? Can we in uniform, aboard ships of war, accustomed to our Battle Stations, and now herded together with death as our business, in a far-off Algerian harbor, where our guns and the hidden guns on near-by mountains are ready to welcome such enemy planes as may come over—can we really celebrate tomorrow as a safe and sane Fourth?

In a paradoxical way I think we can. I think so most emphatically. The surest proof of our sanity in this insane contemporary world is that we find ourselves unsafe. The fact that we are not exactly safe, that none of us puts personal safety first, means only that as a people we are much safer than we were, because we are aware of the dangers which threaten us.

Come to think of it, and thinking particularly of our enemies and the fate of such luckless nations as have fallen under their sway, this Independence Day we will celebrate tomorrow, sitting on a sealed ship in a North African harbor, is probably the sanest Fourth of July most of us will ever have spent. God willing, the day of combat which will follow this Fourth will be our Saint Crispian's day. Do you remember Saint Crispian's day? It was the day on which the armies of an English king, Henry V, faced and vanquished the forces of Charles VI of France.

Henry V, like many another man, grew regrettably pious when he grew older, but for most of us he remains as eloquent as only Shakespeare, and no parents, either royal or plebeian,

WE HAPPY FEW

could have made him. It was Henry V, as spoken for by Shakespeare, who speaks for the pride which each of us will know in the coming years because of our being here. Change the names—the names personal, geographical, and seasonal—in the drumbeat of his recruiting-station verse, and you will, I think, see what I mean and feel what I feel. What follows is Shakespeare's King Henry speaking on the eve of an ancient English holiday, banishing despair and igniting a proper pride in tested men:

If we are mark'd to die, we are enow
To do our country loss; and if to live,
The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
. . . O, do not wish one more!
Rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, through my host,
That he which hath no stomach to this fight,
Let him depart; his passport shall be made,
And crowns for convoy put into his purse.
We would not die in that man's company
That fears his fellowship to die with us.
This day is call'd the feast of Crispian.
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a-tiptoe when this day is nam'd,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say, 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian.'
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
And say, 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember, with advantages,
What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words—
Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester—
Be in their flowing cups freshly rememb' red.
This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered—
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;

WE HAPPY FEW

For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother. Be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition;
And gentlemen in England now abed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*San Francisco*) Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox said Friday, "Much more in ships, planes, and submarines is now on the way to the Pacific." (*London*) British-based planes of the RAF unloaded 15,000 tons of bombs on Europe, principally on Germany, during the month of June. (*London*) German propaganda backed away today from its previous insistence that July 3 would be the date of the Allied invasion of Europe. The Nazi-controlled Paris radio declared, however, that "heavy fighting would come while the leaves are still green." The Rome radio continued its attempt to strengthen and harden Italian morale. (*London*) Large contingents of American and Canadian troops have been convoyed to Britain during the past two months without a single loss, a reliable source revealed today.

15. *The Admiral's Message*

I urge you to listen attentively. From the point of view of each one of us on the *Spelvin* and in this Task Force, I could not have a more important announcement to make.

The purpose of these afternoon talks is that they seek to realize Admiral Kirk's wish that every man on this ship be included in the business of this Task Force, which is each man's business. So far as is compatible with security, the Admiral wants us all to be in the know.

We have been under way since we left Africa at 3:55 P.M. this afternoon. We, and most of the old friends who were in the Atlantic convoy with us, have slipped out of the harbor and headed once again into the Mediterranean. Naturally we want to know where we are going. And why. And what we will be doing in these next few fateful days, which concerns each one of us so vitally.

It is Admiral Kirk who gives the answers. Tonight on the *Spelvin's* bulletin boards, and on the bulletin boards of the ships in this Task Force, a message from the Admiral will make our mission crystal-clear. The Admiral's message is addressed "To All Hands." It reads:

"We are sailing to Sicily. We are going to land a division of Army troops on the southern coast of the island, on beaches near a small town called Scoglitti.

"We and our division are only a part of the forces involved in this attack, but we have a place of honor. To the west of us will be other American forces, and to our east will be the British. We are at the hinge. Overhead we shall have a very large force of Allied aircraft, although much of the time you will not see them. Ahead of us and to the west there will be

THE ADMIRAL'S MESSAGE

parachute troops. Covering the operation at sea will be a strong British battle force.

"I have asked your officers to explain to you in detail where each of you fits into the coming battle. In its broad outline our plan is very much like the landing exercise we held recently. The transports under Commodore Phillips and Commodore Loomis will land their troops on beaches west of Scoglitti; Commodore Bailey's ships will use beaches east of the town. The landing will be assisted by control vessels; it will be supported by the fire of destroyers, cruisers, and other craft; it will be screened by more destroyers. At daybreak we shall be joined by our LST's, LCT's, and LCI(L)'s; we shall proceed to unload the Army's equipment as quickly and cleanly as we can.

"You have been trained for this job. You have been equipped. To the best of their ability your officers have made plans that will work. We are ready.

"We shall be opposed. The Italians are our enemies, and until we have the unconditional surrender of their misguided leaders our attack must be pressed with the utmost spirit. They will be fighting on their home ground, and they will have German help. We can expect a hard fight.

"The Army troops have a tough assignment, and a very important one in the overall plan. Our job is to make it less tough for them by doing our part *well*—we must put them where they want to go, on time, in full force. We must support them by gunfire, unload their supplies and equipment, care for any of their wounded. To do this we must also take care of ourselves. We shall be busy.

"As we proceed to Sicily we shall have several rendezvous, picking up many ships and dropping off others. Your officers will keep you informed of your progress, both on the way and during the landing battle. If you don't get all the news, don't worry; the hunting may be too good for us to stop and talk about it. You will be doing your job to the limit; so will



"We are sailing to Sicily"

THE ADMIRAL'S MESSAGE

everyone else. We have bad news to deliver, but we are saving it, this trip, for Benito Mussolini.

"Good luck!

A. G. KIRK."

This message from Admiral Kirk clarifies everything, and at the proper moment includes us all in the general plan. Our gratitude is genuine. In detail the Admiral's message explains what many of us have been guessing at on the way over, and particularly during these last few days. Certainly not many of us, who knew we were a Task Force and an Amphibious Force at that, have thought we were here merely on convoy duty.

You will note the Admiral has not told us exactly when "D" day is to be or named "H" hour. His reasons for not doing so are self-evident. But a look at the new list of Battle Stations should make clear to you at what hours of the night the major excitement is expected. This list should also make clear how severe the strain of the coming days will be, and how all of us, in the interest of fitness during the long hours of the coming test, should feel that our sacks, reached as early as possible, are each night the best Battle Stations we can at present man.

Now for a message from another Admiral. This time it is the British Admiral A. B. Cunningham who, as Commander-in-Chief of Naval Forces in this theatre under the American General Eisenhower, has issued the following statement to all ships and authorities taking part in this operation.

"We are about," says Admiral Cunningham, "to embark on the most momentous enterprise of the war—striking for the first time at the enemy in his own land.

"Success means the opening of the 'Second Front,' with all that implies, and the first move towards the rapid and decisive defeat of our enemies.

"Our object is clear and our primary duty is to place this vast expedition ashore in the minimum time and subsequently to maintain our military and air forces as they drive relentlessly forward into enemy territory.



Onward, Indeed

THE ADMIRAL'S MESSAGE

"In the light of this duty great risks must be and are to be accepted. The safety of our own ships and all distracting considerations are to be relegated to second place, or disregarded as the accomplishment of our primary duty may require.

"On every Commanding Officer, officer, and rating rests the individual and personal duty of ensuring that no flinching in determination or failure of effort on his own part will hamper the great enterprise.

"I rest confident in the resolution, skill, and endurance of you all to whom this momentous enterprise is entrusted.

ANDREW CUNNINGHAM,
Admiral of the Fleet."

Now, gentlemen, the secret is ours, and we are in on the secret. We know the island towards which we are heading. We know the beaches near Scoglitti are our particular objectives. We know the general plan for the distribution of our forces. We know the historic importance and the hazards of this expedition upon which we are embarked. And we know a good deal about the enemy that has made our being here both inevitable and necessary.

Perhaps, it might also interest you to know that there will be approximately 2500 ships and landing boats with us on this huge Allied armada which is now converging on Sicily.

We realized that yesterday was our last Sunday before battle, because of the prayers for victory offered at church services. Few men who attended mass as conducted by Father Ballinger, first on the gun deck and then in the late afternoon at the jetty's end, will forget the experience. No less impressive was the simple Protestant service held in the crew's mess hall on the transport beside us. All three services were crowded by men and officers, gathered bareheaded around improvised altars, under no compulsion but inner need. So undenominational was this need that some of us, in all good faith, would have attended a Mohammedan service, had prayer mats been spread.

Do you remember all the times you have sung *Onward*,

THE ADMIRAL'S MESSAGE

Christian Soldiers, not reverentially, not really bothering about its implications, merely pleased to release what is triumphant, almost gay, in its assurance? The assurance was there this morning, but the gaiety was gone. For some of us that gaiety has left the hymn forever. In its place has come a statement of what is indomitable in man's spirit. If the music was more moving than the sermons, it is because music can excuse the bromide, redeem sentimentality, and glorify the unutterable simplicities as they deserve to be glorified. Music leaves unsaid what we are afraid to say or are awkward in the saying. It leaves these things unsaid but not unsung.

No less moving this morning was hearing the "Twenty-Third Psalm" (which is song, and lovely song) as it was spoken from the heart, unfalteringly and clearly, by young soldiers and sailors who were perhaps for the first time really understanding what it says. The music associated with Kipling's "Recessional," when blown from saxophones by four sailors, also gained in meaning. Onward, Christian soldiers, indeed!

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Allied Headquarters, North Africa*) Italy began applying the scorched earth policy Saturday to one of Sicily's principal ports, the bomb-battered harbor Trepani. Aerial photographic reconnaissance over Trepani, which is at the northwest corner of Sicily, one hundred miles from the tip of Allied-held Cape Bon, disclosed that a long chain of demolition charges had been set off at the side of the principal quay, rendering it unfit for further shipping. (*U.S.S. Spelvin*) The slim, trim, three-star general who joined Major General Troy Middleton, Commander of the 45th Division, on the *Spelvin* yesterday, is Lieutenant General Omar N. Bradley, second in command of the Western Task Force. In the last weeks of the Tunisian campaign General Bradley was the highly successful commander of all American ground forces. (*London*) Hamburg and Cologne were again raided last night. (*Rome*) An Italian communiqué admitted today that Allied bombers raided Sicily and Sardinia and were over the suburbs of Rome yesterday.

16. *A Soldier's Guide to Sicily*

Since Sicily is our objective and we are twenty-four hours nearer to the Battle Stations which Scoglitti's approaching beaches mean that we must man, forgive me this afternoon if I take Sicily as my theme; Sicily and what every invading American ought to know about Sicily.

To be the author of "What Every Young Man Ought to Know," you do not need to have been either Casanova or Errol Flynn. If you have the right books rather than the wrong experience behind you, you can speak knowingly on sex, even if you happen to be virginal beyond your inclination. Most of you are precisely in this predicament so far as Sicily is concerned. Although we have not as yet touched Sicily, we have some books aboard to guide us.

For reference we have Lieutenant Hill's copy of Ludwig's "The Mediterranean." We have that exhaustive study—"Annex A"—which Captain Ragonnet and the industrious members of his Section have prepared. We have that British-collected, General Eisenhower-blessed "Soldier's Guide to Sicily," which a sergeant was distributing topside at sunset last evening, as rapidly as on a hot Sunday afternoon a Good Humor man disposes of his wares. And just this morning I came across a paragraph about Sicily in that extraordinary book "The Education of Henry Adams."

Three books and one paragraph which have something to say about Sicily! Considering the time and place, a formidable

A SOLDIER'S GUIDE TO SICILY

Sicilian library, I suppose. John Anderson, a wise and witty man, once pointed out that if you borrow from one book, this is damned as plagiarism; but if you borrow from more than three books, this is applauded as scholarship. Permit me, therefore, to indulge in literary cribbage and assault you with some facts about Sicily pilfered from these four sources. They may interest you, and are guaranteed to do you no harm.

Let's start off, blushing, with the most time-worn visual image in geography. There is scarcely an original thinker who, when he looks at a map of Italy, does not contend, with a sense of discovery, that Italy resembles a boot. Granting to the obvious the right of way, giving it its inevitable priority, Italy *does* look like a boot. The fellow who can't see this is blind, and who denies it has not been shod. Sicily, moreover, does bear an encouraging resemblance to a deflated football just about to get away from the Italian toe. Our business is to complete for the moment the separation which geography forgot to finish.

With Europe to choose from and Italy itself still to be taken, you may wonder why so mighty an armada should be bearing down on so small an island. In General Eisenhower's words, "We are about to engage in the second phase of the operations which began with the invasion of North Africa. We have defeated the enemies' forces on the south shore of the Mediterranean and captured his army intact. . . . However, this is NOT enough. Our untiring pressure on the enemy must be maintained. . . . The successful conclusions of these (present) operations will NOT only strike closer to the heart of the Axis, but will also remove the last threat to the free sea lanes of the Mediterranean."

The point of this operation, in other words including even some of my own, is to give us control of the Mediterranean sea lanes; to remove from Axis hands an island which they have used to attack eastbound convoys; to make it unnecessary for shipping and troops to crawl those long, weary 12,000 miles around the Cape of Good Hope; to eliminate the air blockade

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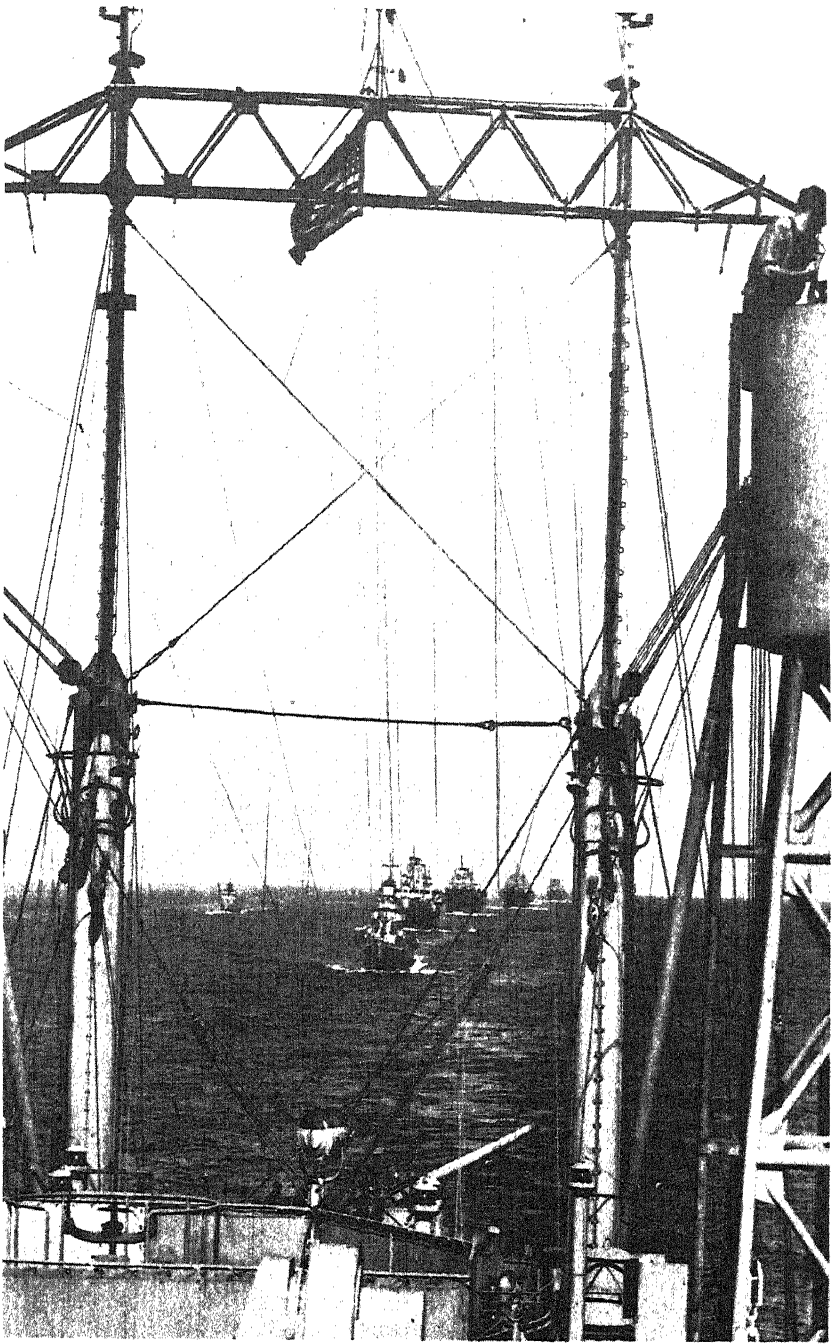
of Malta which the Axis has been able to maintain from Sicily; and to win for us an important base for future operations.

When on "D" day the dawn discloses us to (we trust) startled Italians and Germans, we will by no means be the first invasion force to have taken Sicily. The island has changed owners so many times and fared so ill at history's hands that there is little wonder why, away from its main cities, Sicily is now said to lag behind history in a condition amounting to feudalism.

"Sicily," wrote Henry Adams, "in all ages seems to have taught only catastrophe and violence, running riot on that theme ever since Ulysses began its study on the eye of Cyclops. For a lesson in anarchy, without a shade of sequence, Sicily stands alone and defies evolution."

If I may ring the school bell, the Phoenicians were the first arrivals on those beaches towards which our DUKW's, our LST's, and small landing craft will head; the Phoenicians, those same ancient wanderers who, when they thought they had reached world's end, pushed beyond Gibraltar to discover the Atlantic. Then came the Greeks bearing their gifts and, for a while, Plato, as co-ruler with the tyrant Dionysus of Syracuse, of a Republic which did not work. It was the Greeks under Alcibiades, that Byron, that D'Annunzio, that Jimmy Walker and Windsor of ancient Hellas, who, during the Peloponnesian war, tried disastrously to take Sicily with what for those days was a fleet composed of the unheard-of number of 134 vessels; a fleet which would still be sizable.

The Carthaginians followed, coming over from the African shore we so recently left. Thereafter, without the Sicilians having any say about the matter, Sicily, we are told, fell in turn to the Romans, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths; the Saracens and the Normans; to the Spaniards from the 13th century until 1713; to the French under Napoleon; to the British from 1806 to 1815; and, after an unhappy Bourbon interlude, to the Italians. Sicily's entrance into the uniting Italy of Cavour's dream was made possible by no less colorful a character than



Single File



Invasion-Bound

A SOLDIER'S GUIDE TO SICILY

Garibaldi, who, in 1860, landed at Marsala with his famous "Thousand" and rapidly conquered the country.

The modern Sicilian is said to be a mixture of all the people who have abused his land. He is reported to be violent, with a violence born of the accumulation of their conflicts. Nowadays, except for the Germans and Italians who may be waiting to greet us, the inhabitants of Sicily are claimed to have stewed so long in the hot juices of their history that they think of themselves as one race. The population, according to the 1936 census, was 4,000,078. But by this time, due to Mussolini's bassinet blessings and the blessed warmth of Latin blood, it may have swelled even to 4,000,080. The average of the population per square mile is 400, which means that Sicily is of a greater population density than Connecticut. Hardly a square mile is said to be uninhabited, except for the loftier ranges, which the Army will naturally seek to control.

Our Intelligence Officers report that modern Sicily was wooed by Mussolini's Fascisti with many inviting gestures. The Fascists promised to split up the lands, to do away with absentee landlordism, to develop the country, and reduce disease. As is ever the way of Axis governments, though much was promised little was accomplished.

Do not expect to be taking the Riviera, or even the North African port you have left, when you take Scoglitti and its beaches. An ancient writer, Diodorus, could say of Sicily, "The carpet of flowers was so strong that the hunting dogs lost the scent in all the perfume." I doubt if our nostrils will be so misguided. On the beaches there are said to be more sand fleas than flowers.

Remember when you land in Sicily you will be going into a feudist no less than a feudal country, where the people lack the easy-going pliability of the Italians, and where the murder rate in 1914 was seven times as high as in Lombardy. "The inhabitants," says our Intelligence "Annex," raising a warning finger, "will be found excitable and suspicious, and close contact will only lead to misunderstanding and offense."

A SOLDIER'S GUIDE TO SICILY

Remember that the Sicilians are an island people, drained financially by the mainland. They have long been exposed to living conditions comparable to those enjoyed by our sharecroppers. A typically Sicilian society, which is hardly a social club, is the Mafia. This ancient and bloodstained organization is not unlike our Ku Klux Klan in its enlightenment. Originally organized as a band to resist local tyranny, it has degenerated into straight Al Capone-ism and gangsterism. The members of the Mafia, who hold themselves beyond and above the law, have a regard for life which must be described as scant, even in these war years. What is significant about the Mafia is that law-abiding Sicilians are rumored not to be shocked by its lawless activities.

If you are a soldier planning to stay in Sicily for a while, don't forget that among the Axis allies on the island are such diseases as malaria, enteric diseases, sand fly fever, and the old venereal snipers in an especially acute form.

Remember, too, that most older Sicilians will have seen American dollars long before you try to exchange Invasion dollars at a local bank. At the century's beginning, the best single solution to Sicily's economic problems was emigration to the United States. In 1906, a peak year, some 127,000 Sicilians left for America. The remittances sent by these Sicilians to their families back home were, we are told, an important if not a vital factor in the economic well-being of those left behind. The U. S. Immigration Acts of 1921 and 1932 and the subsequent ban on immigration were grave blows to Sicilian budgets. The Sicilians should be almost as glad to see dollars as we are.

Class is dismissed.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(Allied Headquarters, North Africa) In their struggle for air mastery over Sicily, British and American planes during a Fourth of July offensive smashed key enemy airfields and knocked forty-three enemy fighters out of the sky. Five of the

A SOLDIER'S GUIDE TO SICILY

island's ten air bases shook under bombs, despite frantic counterattacks by some two hundred German and Italian interceptor planes. It was one of the bitterest air engagements in the Mediterranean campaign, General Eisenhower made clear yesterday in a communiqué saying, "The enemy resisted determinedly." The Allies lost thirteen planes. (*Headquarters, South Pacific*) Japanese holdings in the Solomons and New Guinea are staggering under a round-the-clock bombardment from Allied warships, artillery, and aircraft. (*London*) Mussolini has delivered a long report to the Fascist Party on the plight of Italians in the war. Italy must win the war or sink to a fourth- or fifth-class power, the Duce said. Capitulation, he told the Party, would mean shame, disarmament, and the destruction of Italian industries. Mussolini warned that he did not know what could be further expected from the Italian people. He pointed out that already they have given soldiers and money, and that now they are "tightening their belts."

17. *Chain of Command*

Admiral Kirk has taken us all into confidence. He has explained that to the west of us will be other American forces, that to our east will be the British, and that we will be at the hinge. We know that the southern shore of Sicily and, in particular, a small and dreary village—Scoglitti—are to be our targets.

If the larger localities have not been named; if the actual strategy of the coming conflict is not disclosed; if "D" day and "H" hour have not as yet been specified, the reasons must be self-evident. To a much greater degree than when we were in the Atlantic, we are in a danger zone; a zone which hourly becomes more dangerous. There is no sense being either fooled or frightened by this fact. We did not come here to be safe.

In the Atlantic—indeed, until after we had passed Gibraltar—we were not told which North African port was our destination. The reason for this was persuasive beyond dispute. What we did not know as individuals could not hurt us as a group. What each of us ached to know might have hurt us all, had we fallen into enemy hands. If the enemy wanted to know what we wanted to know even more than we did, in those remote and becalmed days, think how much more the Germans and Italians would like to know what we already know about this expedition.

In time we shall know everything, even the outcome. Meanwhile, remember that enemy planes and submarines may yet imperil the secret it is our business to keep. Remember, too, that surprise is one of the most potent of military weapons.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

Among our powerful reserves *must* be certain details of this operation which, in addition to being none of our legitimate business as yet, would only add to our present and future dangers.

There are, however, other ramifications of the secret which can be divulged today. For example, there is the matter of how an enterprise so vast and complex is organized between Allies, from the point of view of command. The Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces in North Africa is, as you know, General Eisenhower. The Deputy Commander-in-Chief is Sir Harold Alexander. In command of all naval forces is Admiral Andrew B. Cunningham, Admiral of the Fleet, whose message was read here with Admiral Kirk's two evenings ago. That new and vitally important branch of the service—the Air—is under the command of Air Chief Marshal Arthur Tedder.

This triple division of the Supreme Command breaks down into two Task Forces, one of which, the Eastern, is British; the other of which, or Western, is American. Admiral Ramsey, General Montgomery, and Vice Air Marshal Broadhurst are in command of the British Task Force.

The American, or Western Task Force, of which we are one of the four component parts, is commanded at sea by Vice-Admiral Hewitt, Commander-in-Chief U. S. Naval Forces North African Waters, who commanded our fleet during the African invasion; on land by Lieutenant General Patton, of "Blood and Guts" fame, assisted by Lieutenant General Omar Bradley, who is on the *Spelvin* with us, and in the Air by General Toohey Spaatz.

The three Task Forces in the Western, or American unit, will be, from east to west: first, ours, under the command of Rear Admiral Kirk, in which General Middleton will lead the 45th or Thunderbird Division; next, Rear Admiral Hall's assault force, which will land the First Division, commanded by Major General Terry Allen, with Brigadier General Roosevelt ("Teddy, Jr.") second in command; and third, Rear Admiral Conolly's Task Force on the west, which will land the Third

CHAIN OF COMMAND

Division commanded by Major General Lucian K. Truscott. A fourth American force will be waiting astern of us to serve wherever needed as a reserve.

With our own eyes we have already seen in our African harbor the three British battleships and the airplane carrier astern of us, as these vessels have come and gone. From them, and from the monitor which was sighted from the bridge one afternoon, we may have some notion of how formidable—excuse me, form-id'able—is the British naval strength gathering in these waters. Just before dinner last night you probably observed to starboard the Task Force now about eight miles ahead, as it joined us off Algiers. Today at noon another convoy could be seen through glasses, this time to port. Presumably it was the British convoy which sailed from England to join us on schedule for this operation. It is faintly visible even now off our port bow.

Last evening, before General Quarters, you may have noticed the MTB's speeding along to starboard. Four squadrons of these British equivalents of our PT boats will, on the day of days, be screening the flanks of our joint operation; screening the flanks and hoping to egg on such units of the Italian Navy as will dare to come out of their unsafe harbors and confront this armada.

The attacks undertaken by us in collaboration with the British on eastern and southern Sicily will not be the only attacks made in this operation. There will be other assaults—feints, bombardments, true assaults, and still more feints—occurring in many, many places before and after our "H" hour.

We may expect trouble before we reach Sicily and the Italians and Germans who await us there. Tomorrow, for instance, we will pass through the Tunisian War Channel around sunrise. This is a mine-swept channel some two or three miles wide, which will necessitate our going in single file or two abreast, and which will make maneuvering difficult.

One sure proof that trouble is at hand will come with the



Army and Navy Together—Admiral Kirk and
General Middleton



"K" Rations

CHAIN OF COMMAND

"K" rations we will soon be eating. At first glance these "K" rations may remind you, if you used to relish Crackerjack, of that little old red-white-and-blue box of popcorn with the sailor boy on it. Any further similarities will be unintentional. The contents of one of these "K" ration boxes are equal to a normal meal in vitamins and nourishment. You will find in them a small container of canned spiced meat, small crackers which have a salty, sweet flavor, and usually some chocolate and two cigarettes. The coffee which will be served to you should help in coaxing everything into its proper place.

So far as our soldiering or sailing is concerned, the period of "let's pretend" is over. The reality is upon us. This drama, so slow in starting, often so unreal even now, is galloping to its climax. "D" day itself is near. And "D" day and the days which follow it are days which offer no choice. They **MUST** succeed. They **MUST** succeed unless we wish this war to be lengthened by at least two years. They **MUST** succeed unless we want all this planning, all this meticulous preparation, this personal sacrifice, this effort, this money, this time, this tension, this danger, and this hope to have been squandered in vain.

That, God willing, this operation will be successful, I don't think any one of us doubts. We have more than a rightful cause to give us confidence. We have the plan. We have our Allies, our armaments, our leaders, both naval and military. We have this new fusion of strength known as the Amphibious Force. And we have ourselves.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(Allied Headquarters, North Africa) Allied planes struck hard Monday at six towns in Sicily and a seventh in Sardinia in the pre-invasion campaign to get air supremacy in the Mediterranean. *(London)* Berlin radio reported that Field Marshal Baron Von Richthofen, Commander of the German Air Fleet during the Battle of Britain, has been dispatched to Italy to help bolster defenses against the mounting Allied aerial assaults. The broadcast, recorded by the Associated Press, said that Richthofen would assist Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, Axis Air

CHAIN OF COMMAND

Chief for Southern Europe, in organizing defense against attacks on possible invasion points in Sardinia, Sicily, and the Italian mainland. (*Stockholm*) A Swedish communiqué last Tuesday announced that military exercises will be conducted on the same extensive scale as last spring and winter. (*Washington*) U. S. Naval forces have scored a signal victory over Japanese fleet units in the Battle of Kula Gulf, the Navy disclosed today. (*Stockholm*) General Von Falkenhorst, German Commander-in-Chief in Norway, is reported today to have issued an appeal for loyalty to his troops, complaining of what he described as a "shameful increase in desertions." (*Moscow*) The mighty battle between German and Russian troops on the 180-mile front between Orel and Belgorod is growing in intensity. It is estimated that another two days of such spirited Soviet resistance will considerably blunt the Germans' attacking power.

18. *The Ships Forgather*

This morning at General Quarters and during the half hour thereafter we were seeing history plain.

Did coffee call some below; coffee which is always there? Did breakfast and the need to start this day the way all days are begun tempt us poor creatures of habit to abandon such a collection of ships as we may never see again and as the world has never seen before? Were we grumpy as individuals, waiting for our daily eggs and bacon, when all around us were visible proofs of an unrationed group strength and of a group endeavor, new to nations and to navigation?

Unless we can read history at our leisure—history already made, the record of deeds done, with the small man's discomforts evaporated—must the voice of history always be drowned out by the imperious and petty snarls of the inner man?

The smallness of man the individual, with all our inner tyrannies and humiliating frailties, is worth considering today because of what we saw this morning.

Did this North African harbor teem this morning with British and American LCT's, LST's, LCI's, tankers, freighters, destroyers, transports, and cruisers, until it resembled an ant-hill into which hot water has just been poured? It did. It most assuredly did. The war canoes, big and little, were all around us. Even when seen from the peak of that crow's nest which is the upper Signal Bridge, the procession stretched fore and aft to the horizon, beyond human sight.

From a strictly military point of view, all these ships and troops—British and American—arriving at one long-selected

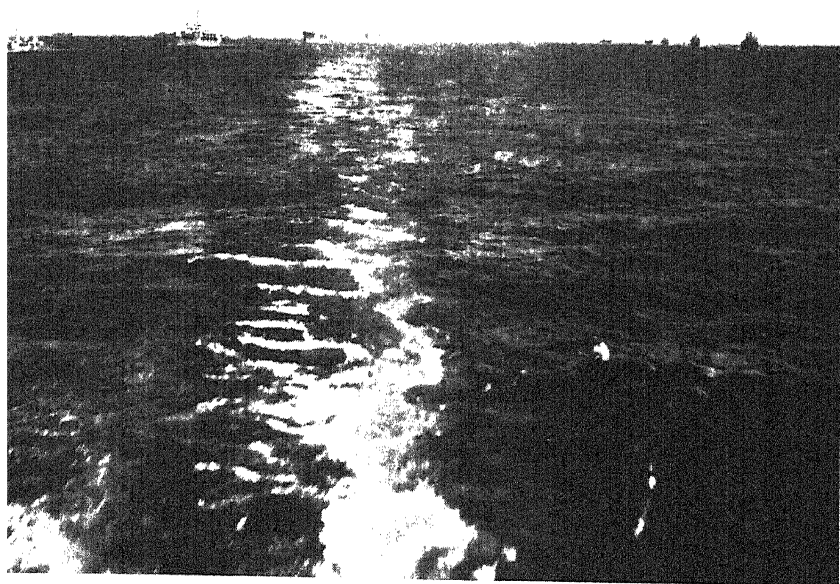
THE SHIPS FORGATHER

spot in the far-off Mediterranean mean that the plan has so far worked, that the blueprints and the figures are now steel and guns and uniformed men on their way at the right time in this gigantic movement to meet and overwhelm the enemy. Just now this military viewpoint alone matters, because upon its success all else for us depends—our big freedoms and small pleasures, the future reachings of our minds and lives, even such minor indulgences as those morning eggs which we now take for granted.

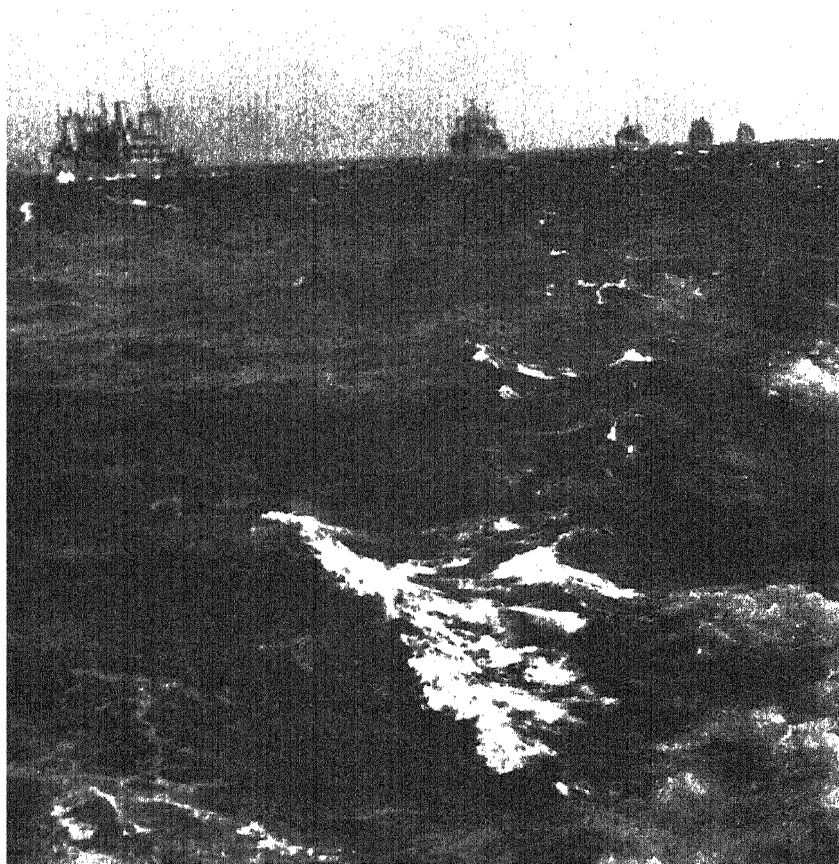
It was those eggs this morning which called some below, keeping them from seeing what man has not seen before. Not that there was anything wrong in needing food and seeking it, any more than there is anything wrong in needing and seeking sleep, sleep by means of which we paradoxically abandon consciousness in order to renew our living. But sleep, breakfast, and grumpy morning dispositions, being no doubt natural, are the more eloquent reminders of how picayune we are as individuals and how magnificent we can be as people. Those ships—those endless ships—this morning make our group magnificence plain.

Think of the titan's effort represented by these vessels having been made, manned, and moved. Think of the conferences for which they stand; the dark mines from which they were scooped; the dinner pails, the sweat, the bent backs, the heat of blast furnaces, the working hours, the fatigue, and the sciences mastered, which they symbolize. Think of the businessmen, with their organizational talents and indispensable aptitudes, who have slaved patriotically, regardless of health or hours, to make the delivery of these ships to the nation their business. Think of the huge plans, originating behind closed doors with a few men gathered from afar at the top. Think of how these plans have not only taken form but have seeped down into all our forty-eight states and into almost every home in each town and county in these forty-eight states.

Think of how England and her Empire, which, like our country and all countries, is only the sum total of many fire-



The Ships Forgather



The Mediterranean Roughens

THE SHIPS FORGATHER

sides, has likewise strained and skimped and suffered as a nation to have its convoy and its fleet join ours at the appointed moment for this mass convergence upon Axis Sicily.

Think of the dark years of despair now turning into hope. Think of the gasoline that has dodged submarines in the Atlantic to keep these craft and these planes moving. Think of the joy rides forsworn at home, of the toys and trinkets left unpurchased, and the bonds bought; of the families separated, and the strangeness of the scene in which all the men on these ships find themselves. Think of the interrupted lives, the loneliness, the courage, the professional skills turned to new uses or halted, and the might-have-beens carried as cargo on each vessel.

Think of how breathlessly the news of this expedition's movements will be awaited in China, in Berchtesgaden, in Turkey, in Russia, Sweden, conquered Europe, Mexico, Italy, Australia, Tokyo, and in plain Kalamazoo. Think of all these things, and the cup of breakfast coffee not only cools but curdles, while one's wonder grows at what men—mere men, needing those morning cups of coffee and their sleep—are able to do when they work as that superman—an aroused, outraged, and indignant group.

If you are not too tired thinking of the obvious, allow that huge armada, seen this morning, to conjure a few more images. Think of how different history would have been had Hitler after Dunkirk been able to amass such a fleet; had Xerxes been so equipped; had Hannibal had these ships and our tanks instead of rafts to support his elephants; had the Emperor Maximilian been backed by such strength when he set forth on his star-crossed Mexican misadventure; or had Napoleon at Toulon been capable of assembling and launching such a floating force.

Above all, think of how paralyzing to all we hold dear it would be if, at this very moment, such an armada as is now luckily ours were moving on Long Island, Vineyard Haven,

THE SHIPS FORGATHER

or Bermuda under Axis command—even as we of the Allied Forces are now converging upon Sicily.

Yes, we saw history plain this morning. And history will be different because of what we saw and because of what as a group we are.

We touched hands, too, as it is hard not to do in the Mediterranean, with history ancient and modern. As we edged along the mountainous African coast and passed Bizerte, we were passing the home town of that celebrated and unwashed lady, Dirty Gertie of Bizerte, who has emerged from this war to take her place in song—if not with Helen of Troy or Cleopatra, at least with the Hinky-Dinky-Parlez-Vous Mademoiselle from Armentieres.

As we passed Bizerte, General Bradley, to whom the sight must have seemed homelike, remarked that he had not found one building in the place untouched by war. Most of the buildings have been flattened by bombs, said the General, and the few standing have had their windows blown out.

Not far from Bizerte, around and at which so much history has been made in this war, we came near other ruins; ruins from ancient history, ruins seen from too great a distance to be clearly distinguished even in the bright African sunlight; the ruins of Carthage.

Carthage, you may remember, was the city from which an earlier invading force headed for Sicily and conquered the island. In her fight for empire with the same Rome in which we are not uninterested, geography played a mean trick on Carthage. She was a city born, so to speak, on the wrong side of the railroad tracks. Had she been founded in Europe instead of Africa; had she had rich fields and tremendous natural resources at her doorstep, that rumbling Roman senator, Cato, might have seen his demands that Carthage be destroyed go unrealized.

Although Carthage is now no more than the scant stones we passed this morning, names are more lasting than rocks. Hamilcar, Hasdrubal, and Hannibal are three Carthaginian



The Admiral Watches the Storm

THE SHIPS FORGATHER

names (all from one household) which still, as someone has said, sound on the ear like distant surf.

During the day we have passed reminders of ruins more recent than those of Carthage. Early this morning two squadrons of Mustangs swept by us. Some said these planes were on patrol duty. Others maintained they were either fresh from a raid on Sicily or were off to meet some enemy aircraft in a dogfight near Pantelleria. At lunchtime the inner man, who must eat, again interfered, for many of us, with the seeing of about one hundred Mitchells and Lightnings, as they thundered past to starboard. Again there were conflicting rumors. Some knew these medium bombers were just taking the air. Others claimed they were returning to their African base, after having made a Carthage of some Sicilian military objective. The wise-aces even guessed that these planes were coming back to pick up more bombs and ferry them across to Sicily, where, when dropped, they would knock on the doors of our future hosts, the Italians and Sicilians.

Just after luncheon a large group of Flying Fortresses came within recognition distance from us. They, too, had evidently been calling on Sicily.

At 1:45 this morning, instead of at dawn as some had expected, we entered at Galita that mine-swept Tunisian War Channel which we quitted at 1:30 P.M. To starboard, some may have noticed during the sun-drenched hours such proofs of the hazards of a Mediterranean cruise these days as a few beached ships and one beached destroyer.

Last night at General Quarters, when most of us were convinced that "something would happen," it looked for a few tense moments as if that something were on its way. It was then that on the bridge we heard that "a number of unidentified planes" were approaching.

What these planes might have done, and what other planes may yet do, brings me to the excellent Navy film on First Aid, which was shown with increasing, though still poor, attendance in the Junior Officers' Wardroom last night. Let's not deceive

THE SHIPS FORGATHER

ourselves. Captain Dowling and the other Navy doctors aboard—Dr. Littlefield, Dr. Wharton, and Dr. Levine—and their pharmacist's mates are apt to be busy during the next few days, and it is we who will overwork them. Our days of drills and maneuvers are long past. We are playing for keeps now. Anything we or those near us know about First Aid may be a matter of life and death for someone, including ourselves.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Algiers*) An enemy ammunition ship off the coast of southern Sicily was blown up yesterday by American fighter bombers. An Axis barge was also hit and probably sunk. Our planes carried out a series of heavy attacks on airfields throughout Sicily, leaving a trail of destruction behind them. Five of these planes failed to return. (*U.S.S. Spelvin*) Reveille tomorrow will be heard at 4:46 A.M. We will forgather for General Quarters at 5:03 A.M.

19. *Battle Station*

11:30 P.M., *July 9*

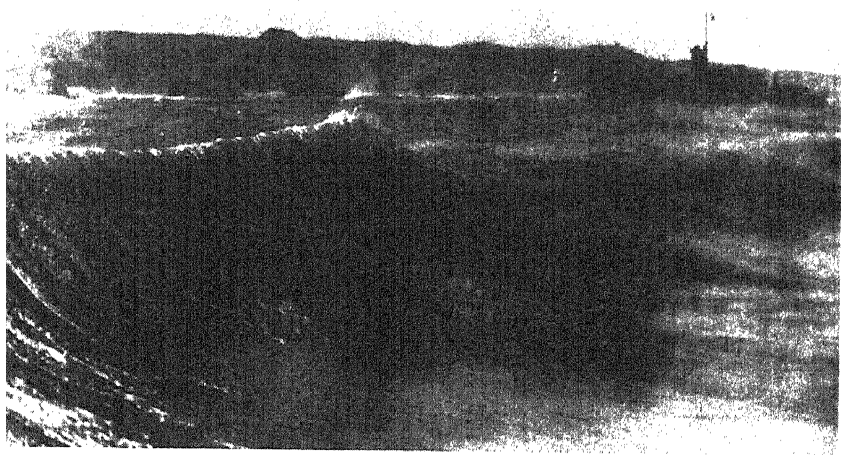
"H" hour, the hour of hours, is almost here. It is now 11:30 P.M., and the attack is scheduled to begin at 2:45 A.M.

When we passed Malta—unconquerable Malta—toward the middle of the afternoon, and later came to Gozo, we knew our next island was Sicily. We are near Sicily now, still moving towards it in the darkness. It will not be long before we reach our anchorage off Scoglitti on Sicily's southern shore.

Already we have had our hints of "D" day's approach. Throughout the afternoon the gray sky has been filled from time to time by coveys of Spitfires. Several convoys have come within sight on the lunging waters. Six aircraft, said to be hostile, were reported twelve miles away from us in the late twilight. Then, just about an hour ago, fires and flares were seen ahead, and distant guns were heard. It is towards these guns and fires that we are steering. The enemy is there. Even the extra slab of ice cream on the pie after tonight's steak dinner was a pleasant way of our being told that something extra was soon to be expected of us.

Let the cynical laugh, but we have seen something of a miracle tonight. All afternoon our hearts have grown the heavier with the increasing heaviness of the sea. Things have looked bad for us—very bad—these past eight hours or so. By some ugly mischance the first storm we have had in the Atlantic or the Mediterranean overtook us this afternoon when, having traveled so far, we were at last so near.

By 2:30 P.M. the Mediterranean was being swept by a 30-knot wind. As the waves rose under sullen skies, they subjected



Menacing Breakers

BATTLE STATION

the little PC boats now with us to a terrible beating. The destroyers were surf-bathing uncomfortably. Even the largest transports were wobbling. One by one, three of their barrage balloons were blown away from them, as easily as a child's balloon slips through his fingers in the park. By 5 o'clock the gale had increased until, as darkness came on, the waves swelled into more and more sizable mountains. The PC boats were by then egg-shelling their way, not so much through as on the heavy seas. The prospect of trying to send landing craft into the beaches against such odds was disturbing, to put it mildly.

Many of us remembered the Spanish Armada's fate. We did not want to remember it, but we did. Nature had undone that formidable Spanish Task Force, dashed its galleons to pieces on the rocks, and scattered them, when in full and proud array it had reached England's shores. We were a far larger armada. Would we be the victim of the same misfortune?

The weather reports were encouraging. "The sea will calm before midnight," Lieutenant Commander John Corry had said from the beginning and kept on saying, even when the seas at hand grew rougher.

Then suddenly, a little while ago, the miracle of which I spoke occurred. No matter where you may be stationed, you must have felt it. The wind died down almost as abruptly as it had started. Look over the sides now in the faint light left by a storm-clouded quarter moon, which is nearing the horizon, and you will find the Mediterranean still choppy, still tossed by a heavy surf, but, compared to what it was only a short time back, as quiet as if God had put his hand on it. This ought to be the best of good omens.

Some transport planes, carrying our paratroops, were reported off to starboard shortly before I stumbled down from the bridge to find a place for this microphone on the floor of a darkened passage off the Chart Room. Although I could not see the planes, I heard the roar of their motors, full of power, full of defiance.

BATTLE STATION

Midnight, July 9

Perhaps you can hear it. The distant gunfire of which I spoke last time has greatly increased. The fires are still burning on the beaches ahead. If anything, they are brighter, because we have been pushing quietly in to our anchorage. They cast a glow in the sky the way a city does at night. They are not easy to make out as yet. One of the fires looks as if it were a bit inland. In shape it is rectangular enough to be the outlines of a lighted airfield, which of course it is *not*.

These fires mean that our planes have been busy. So do the inquisitive enemy searchlights which have been sweeping the sky from the beaches to the west.

Scoglitti, our objective, must be about five miles away from us in the darkness just now. Our convoy is reaching its destination safely and without confusion.

If our first sight of Sicily has consisted of fires burning in the night on a land we cannot see, there is a reason for this. According to plans, the Northwest African Air Force was scheduled to conduct an air offensive throughout the whole Mediterranean area prior to our coming. By these heavy air attacks the Allies have sought to compel Axis air forces to withdraw from fighter range of the desired beaches in Sicily in order to maintain their own cities, industries, armies, and air bases.

Before daylight this morning a heavy bombing attack is scheduled to be made on all Sicilian airfields, and for the balance of the day a fighter group of approximately thirty-six planes is supposed to be maintained over each of Sicily's three main airfield centers. American fighter squadrons will be based on Malta and other near-by islands.

Those paratroopers we heard heading inland will have been dropped with others during the night in the area of the Task Force to our west. The guns we hear at first will not necessarily mean that the Italians and the Germans have spotted us. Most

BATTLE STATION

probably they will be antiaircraft guns, called into action by our paratroopers and our transport planes.

12:45 A.M., *July 10*

That crunchy, bumpy noise you may have heard five minutes ago was our anchor on the way down. It's blacker than coal up here. Our ships are still slipping into position. They are gathering like conspirators. We can't see them, but we can feel them, the way in a dark room you know someone else has entered, is creeping past you, or is standing next to you.

A searchlight from time to time cuts the sky above the beaches. A few tracer bullets are being batted out, like hot baseballs, by the enemy's shore batteries. The sound of ack-ack can be heard inland.

Don't be alarmed by the submarine just off our port side. It's one of ours. I hear the sight of it cost a soldier his dinner. He had wandered out on deck to get some air and see the show in which he will soon take part. Tonight's second slab of ice cream and the seesawing of the Mediterranean had not been getting along too well. The soldier was holding his head in his hands when, to his horror, one of his eyes rolled open to discover the periscope, the conning tower, and finally the whale's back of a submarine loom out of the tar-colored waves beside him. "Jesus Christ!" he is reported to have said, at the same time that he said good-by to the ice cream and raced below.

Everything else is under control.

1:30 A.M., *July 10*

A great wave of planes—our planes—has swept over us. They were our transports coming out. Although only a few of them could be seen, all of them could be felt and heard. They mean that our 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers have been landed and are already at work.

The darkness up here has grown. It's hard to make out the person next to you on the Admiral's Bridge, unless in passing

BATTLE STATION

he just happens to be silhouetted against one of those fires still burning on the beaches.

The small boats should be in the water by now. One of ours has returned with Captain Mitchell, from some errand in the night. From transport after transport these small craft are being lowered. They must be filled with anxious men; the small boat men who are the point and glory of this Force.

Shortly before I came down, another wave of probably fifty of our transport planes has roared above us, heading out from Sicily, their mission completed, their paratroopers landed in the blackness of an unknown land.

Before the thunder of their motors could be heard, a lull appeared to have settled on the shores ahead. Then came the first faint drone of the approach, and some tracer bullets rose skyward, no doubt to greet them.

2:40 A.M., *July* 10

We are within five minutes of what should have been the time for "H" hour. But "H" hour has been delayed until 3:45 at the request of the Commander of Transports. Blame the choppy seas for this, and difficulties they have caused in getting the small boats out. So take time off to get your second wind.

Don't think that things have not been happening above, in spite of this delay. Do you remember those enemy searchlights which I have mentioned several times? Well, they have given us some uneasy moments. There's a hell of a lot of difference between our searchlights when they are looking for the enemy, and enemy searchlights when they are looking for us.

As far as I can make out, there have been three of these searchlights sweeping from the shore. When we were stealing in, and even after we reached our anchorage, they swept only the sky. They kept raking it back and forth, back and forth, sticking up like nervous white fingers in the darkness. They were after our planes then, and didn't seem to know we were here.

BATTLE STATION

Even when they followed the transport planes out, these searchlights swung far above us—which was precisely what we kept hoping they would do. One of these beacons, however, carried its search toward the horizon until its lowered light hovered over our ships to port. Then it blinked and went out, apparently not having spotted anything of interest.

This made us breathe the easier.

But only for a while. Because in a few minutes those searchlights were in motion again. The same one that had blinked before, woke up in alarm. When it came on, it was aiming straight above it at the sky, which was still all right with us. Then it began circling its light out to sea, lower and lower each time, until it started skimming the waves. In its sweep it landed on one of our ships lying at an angle. It paused there for an awful time before starting to move again. Then it swung slowly past the other vessels ahead, seeming to halt for the same awful time on each one of them, icing them with light or showing them up as silhouettes, as neat and black as you will ever find on any Ship Identification cards.

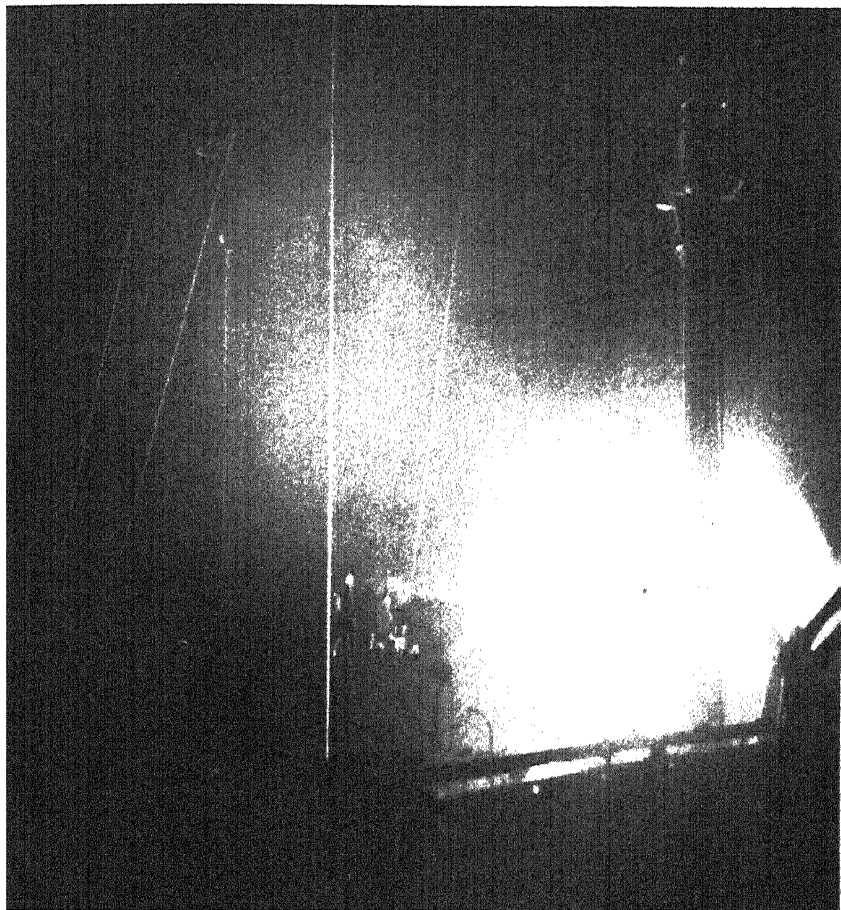
The beacon finally reached us. Our turn came just the way it used to in school. Waiting for it wasn't pleasant. The light cut closer and closer until it was full upon us, blinding us when we looked straight at it. It wasn't hard, then, to make out the faces on the Admiral's Bridge. It would have been hard *not* to make them out. The faces of the men up there looked the way an actor's face does without make-up under a spotlight. You know that sallow look? Even the ship's gray was lighter than the sun at midday had ever made it.

I thought they had found us. I couldn't see how they had missed us.

"Can they see us?" I asked Captain Wellings, our Gunnery Officer.

"No. We can see them all right," he smiled, "but I don't think they can see us on a night like this. Anyway we are out of their range of vision."

This was good news. It still is.



The Guns Speak

BATTLE STATION

With such targets as these three enemy beacons screaming for attention, our gunners must be going crazy. But so far they have managed to hold on to their itchy fingers and keep the secret of our being here—if it still is a secret.

Those guns, those deep-throated, distant guns you may hear, don't belong to us. They are British and come from the east coast. From the sound of them the show must be on there. And on in a big way.

3:15 A.M., *July 10*

The searchlights are still at it. When I got back to the bridge, it looked for a moment as if a gunner on a near-by ship had blown one of them out. Since we are said to be outside their seeing range, the moment this gunner let go wasn't an entirely happy one. His wanting to fire was human enough. There was the beacon ahead, begging for attention. And there was the gunner eager to oblige. It would have been as simple as that if, by releasing his tracers, he had not given away the secret of our being here.

As these tracer bullets arched through the sky, some words—almost as hot—shot out on the bridge.

For a few minutes the light went out. Then another of the three beacons came on, sweeping the ships in earnest. It was followed by the third. Before long the first light blazed out, now on again, now off again, like a lightning bug. The gunner had missed his mark. He has been answered by tracer bullets coming out from the shore.

At 3:10 there was a big explosion on the beach ahead. For a fearful moment it blew the darkness away as if it were smoke, putting fire in its place.

Since I made my last report, the huge British guns have continued booming to the east. The sky has become fairly active. Some red and white tracers have been chasing one another inland, following a high, arched course. Three enemy parachute flares, dropped from a plane or planes coming in from west of Scoglitti, have been hung off our starboard bow.

BATTLE STATION

The orchestra is warming up. The stage is set. The curtain is scheduled to go up in a few minutes now.

4:15 A.M., July 10

The Fourth of July was never like this! These are the biggest fireworks I've ever seen. Our guns have really been speaking up, and it looks like they are much more than just big talkers. The sky is as bright as a summer parasol with the sunlight streaming through it.

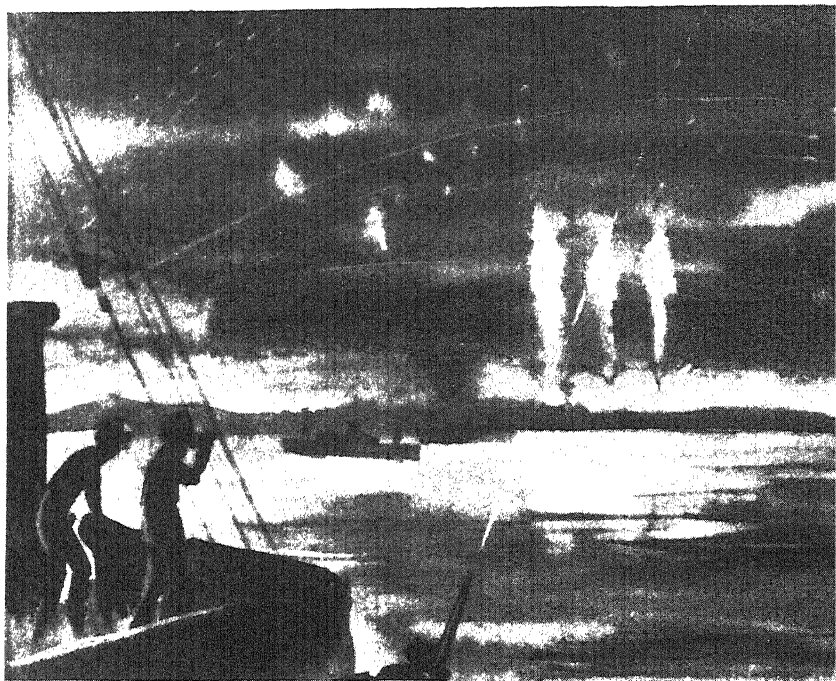
The darkness is fighting a losing battle. Light is everywhere. Never for long. Always changing. Always in the swiftest motion. Then the night seeps back, only to be driven away again. Overhead it's all dots and dashes that you can see, quivering as they race to rise and fall; dots and dashes, and streamers of heat, and rockets overtaking rockets.

Light and noise. The noises are as different as the lights. There's the froglike *glump* of flak as it thuds through the water after a brief splash. There's the staccato stitching of the 20- and 40-millimeters. There's a sigh, a whine, and a whistle coming from something—I don't know what.

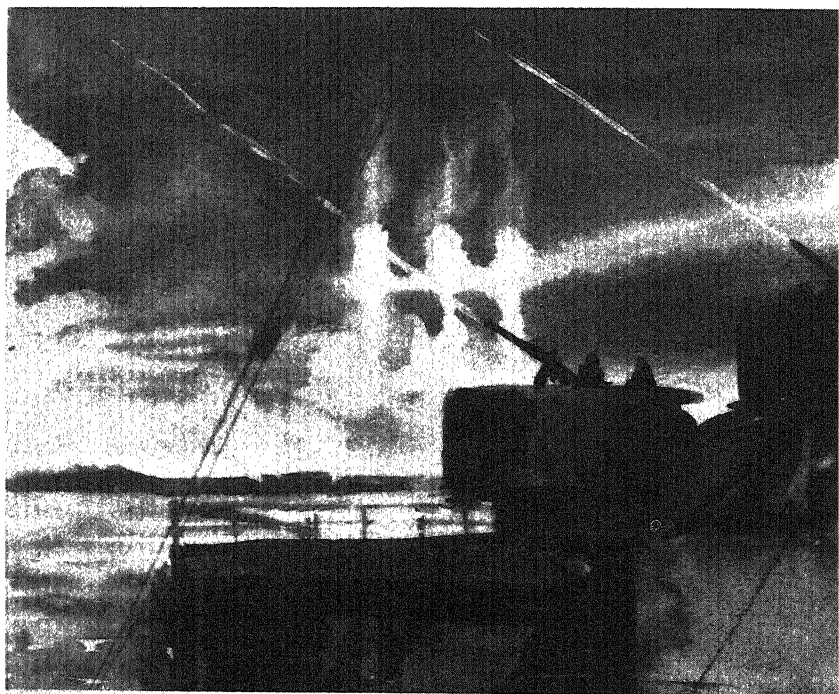
There are big guns, little guns, medium-sized guns—all of them fluent, and all of them demanding to be heard from, whether they are on the ships around us, in the Task Force ahead, with the enemy on shore, or the British to the east. The big guns bellow in a full, damp, dull tone. They sound the way a goldfish bowl might sound if—water and all—it exploded in your tummy.

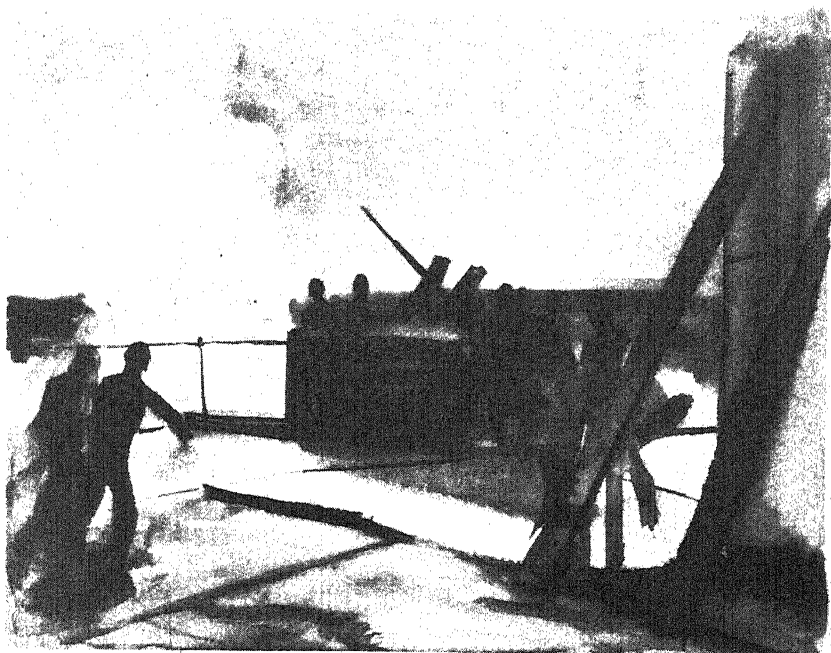
Under this flaming cover the small landing boats have been pushing into shore. Bright as the sky is, the sea is still so dark that I have been able to see the Viking outlines of only a few of our little boats. But once in a while, in the din, the sputter of their motors has been heard.

Our big guns appear to have got two of those prying searchlights. They have been snuffed out for quite a while. It was a cruiser, I think, that scored a bull's-eye on one of them. The beacon scarcely had time to wink. Then it was done for.



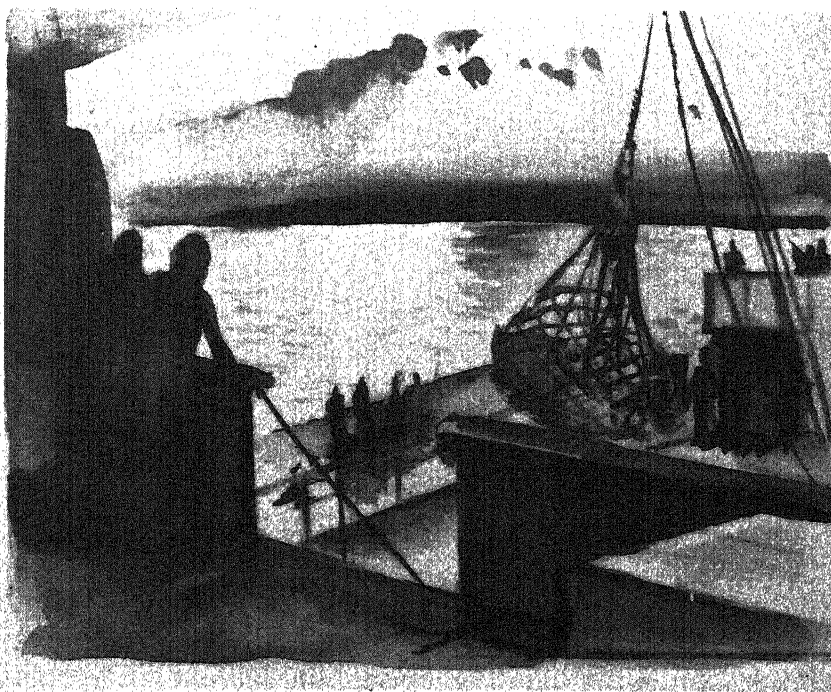
Night Assault





Sunrise over Sicily

Vaiksnora



Vaiksnora

BATTLE STATION

4:45 A.M., *July 10*

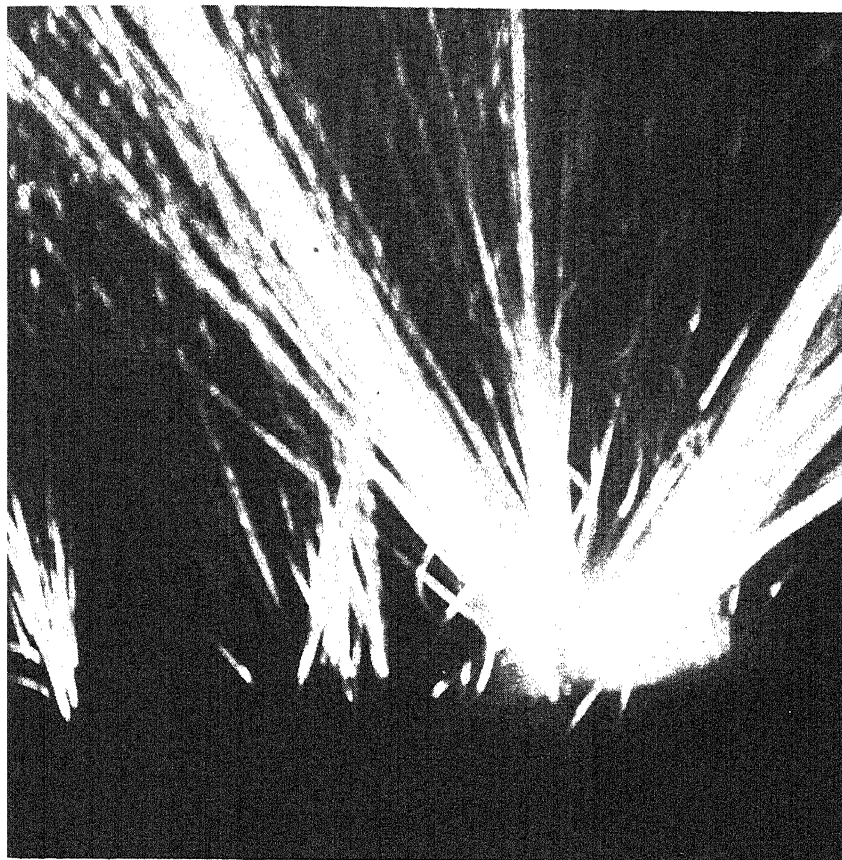
Those planes are enemy planes. Although there don't seem to be many of them, there are enough. So far as I can make out, they came toward us in the uppermost darkness, under which all the lights are sandwiched. During the last half hour they have been hurtling back and forth, heard but not seen, and not leaving us unseen.

They headed for our beaches, dropping flares over them. Then they turned wheel for us, particularly for our cruisers, still dropping flares. The flares have been both to port and starboard. One of them has hung right over our Force like an old-fashioned light over a dining room table.

They are strange things, these German flares; disturbing but completely undisturbed. All the other lights are twitchy, nervous, explosive, darting. But these flares have a fearsome serenity. The parachutes supporting them do more than rest on the air. They doze there, as calm and unmoving as if they were beyond the law of gravity.

The other lights are momentary. These appear to be eternal. The others kindle the air around them with sparks, and then dash on or out. These just hang like fixtures. They are bright enough to cast shadows on the bridge, which up until now has been dark, except for that stab by the beacon.

They burn singly, these flares. Without warning a street lamp comes on, far up in the sky, blinding enough to be burning a whole city's current, and the sea below lights up the way Broadway used to look. This street lamp stays on for what seems an eternity, almost without moving. When it at last goes off and you begin to breathe again, another street lamp—the twin of its parent—bursts into light some yards below the first. If anything it is brighter than its predecessor, because it is nearer. Then the same thing happens again and again, and this necklace of light gradually extends itself, showing its stones one by one, until the final pendant dangles just above you.



Battle Sky

BATTLE STATION

The Germans can't be accused of leaving us in the dark. But so far they have only shed light. We have done our bit, too. Our tracers are arching on these flares from all sides. And a big fire is burning on a hill to starboard.

5:15 A.M., July 10

Good news. Word has just been received that initial landings have been accomplished on all of our beaches, and that, in general, slight opposition has been met with from the ground forces of the enemy.

This means that the little boats from all our transports have pushed in, wave by wave, to their designated landing places and that our troops have established themselves on shore. For the details we shall have to wait. What matters is that the Sicilian invasion is by now a fact.

The sky is still noon-bright up here in splotches. There have been more flares. More enemy planes, too. One of these has falconed down towards the *Spelvin*, its motors angry, as if to dive-bomb us. It was a rumble, a roar, a rumble again—and a bad moment. As a matter of fact, being anchored here in the light—waiting—has given us a lot of bad moments; though, thank God, so far only to think about.

6 A.M., July 10

It's dawnish up here now. Sicily's coast line has begun to take shape. It is still indistinct; still part of the vanishing night. Far inland, to starboard, the kind of mountain Mount Etna might be, if only it were within seeing range, is slowly working its way into the dawn. The pink-blue daylight is creeping down to the beaches. You might expect to hear birds. Instead the sky rattles with antiaircraft fire and the hurried booming of the big guns on our cruisers and destroyers, and that near-by British monitor. The shore line also rumbles every now and then with battle sounds like a kettledrum.

The Admiral's Bridge was dark the last time I felt my way



Messerschmitts Again



Russo

The Beaches Ours

BATTLE STATION

up to where Lieutenant Burton was standing. But only for a minute. At 5:20, directly ahead of us, a great blob of light bleached and reddened the sky, tearing the night into shreds. It was followed by a blast more sullen and deafening than any we have so far heard. What we saw scattered across the sky was a ship from the Task Force to the west of us.*

We had scarcely been able to say, "Look! They got one!" when the German planes which had done the getting could be seen flocking towards us. Again there were not many. Again there were enough. Say, six; flying low, leaving a trail of big splashes behind them in the water where their bombs had fallen. One of them slanted down across our bow, barely missing the cruiser off our port side.

While these planes have swung back and forth, we have been watching the sky for more than them. We have been waiting, waiting, for those promised British Spitfires to come to us from Malta and give us cover.

They must have been a little late. They were due over us at 5. They would have been welcome then. They were no less welcome only a few minutes ago, when they were sighted off our stern. They are equally welcome now, when, like birds of deliverance, they have flown across us, high, high up in perfect formation, sweeping the copper-colored sky.

As a matter of fact I'm afraid they were too warmly welcomed by some of our gunners, who knew just enough about aircraft identification to be sure that anything with wings must be a target. Fortunately the Spitfires were out of range. No less fortunately they are with us. We can all feel the more comfortable now.

6:30 A.M., *July 10*

You can see Scoglitti now to port. It's a group of drab white houses clustered around a church tower. The beaches on either side of it could be any beaches seen in the freshness of an early morning, if it were not for the little boats nudging into them

* This turned out to be the destroyer *Maddox*.

BATTLE STATION

and the swarming dots visible through binoculars on the sands. The fields and slight hills backing these beaches could be any peaceful hills and fields, if it were not for the smoke rising here and there from fires burning on them. Even so, they look almost as tranquil as if they were the Contour Maps, increased in scale and come to life.

The sea and the sky are different. They are full of war. The ships in our Task Force are all around us. They look refreshed by the morning sun, and are unhurt. Our gunners continue to pivot, covering whatever passes in the sky.

It's quieter up here, though one of our destroyers has been blazing away at a shore battery that has been firing on her from one of the hills.

The unloading shuttle service has started.

7:15 A.M., *July 10*

We are weighing anchor now to move closer in to shore.

The Spitfires have been patrolling once more. They have come back again and again, in spite of their warm welcome.

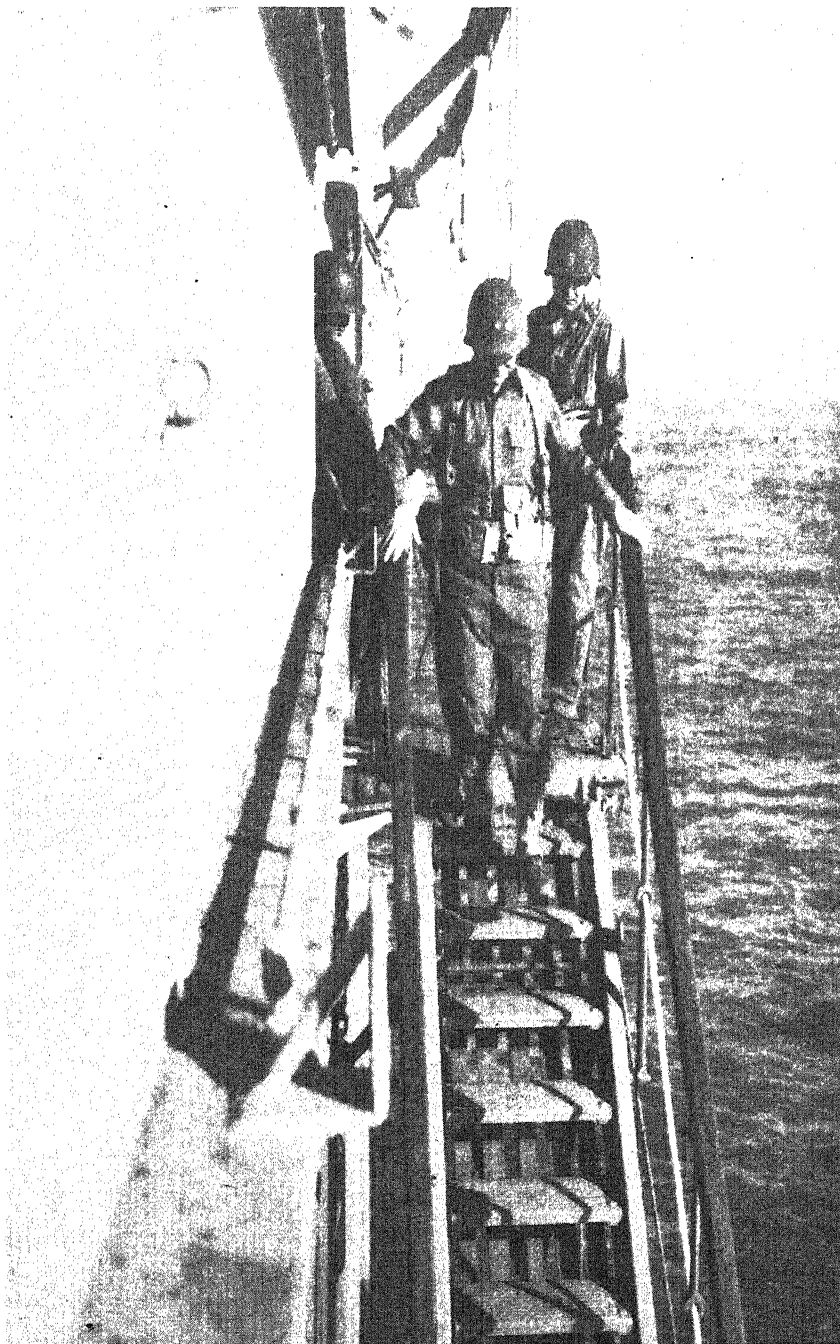
Everyone topside has been nibbling on or at "K" rations and feels the better for coffee, with its illusion of breakfast.

Most of the shore batteries are silenced by now, due to the spectacular accuracy of Naval gunnery. One by one they have been snuffed out like candles.

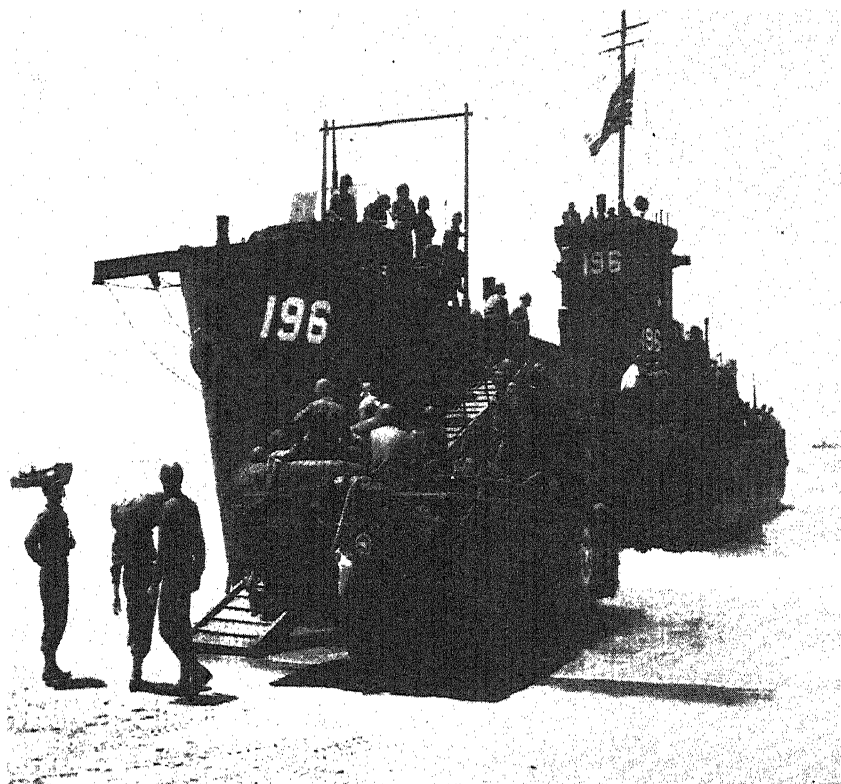
Some jeeps have been lowered into the landing boats panting alongside of us. And the LCT's are now going in, rolling quite a bit and crowded with boys in khaki, only a few of whom look seasick and are holding their heads. These LCT's have been escorted and given fire cover by our destroyers. The Army is leaving us in large numbers. As it does so, one of our cruisers is thundering away at an inland target, and a big fire is burning on the beach to port.

8 A.M., *July 10*

For the moment, all's quiet. We have just dropped anchor. And after shaking hands with the Admiral, General Middleton



General Middleton Goes Ashore



LCI Unloading with Amphibious DUKW in Foreground

BATTLE STATION

of the 45th Division has gone ashore. In the same boat with him went Clark Lee, the INS correspondent. Fires are still smoking off the beaches, and guns rumbling intermittently.

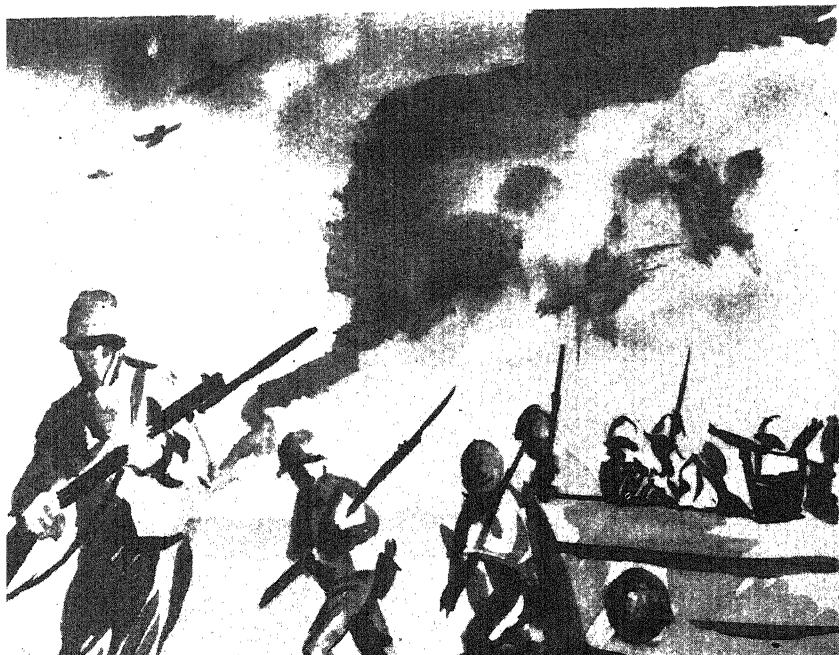
The chief news is that there seems to have been no serious opposition. A message from shore says, "Considerable artillery and prisoners taken."

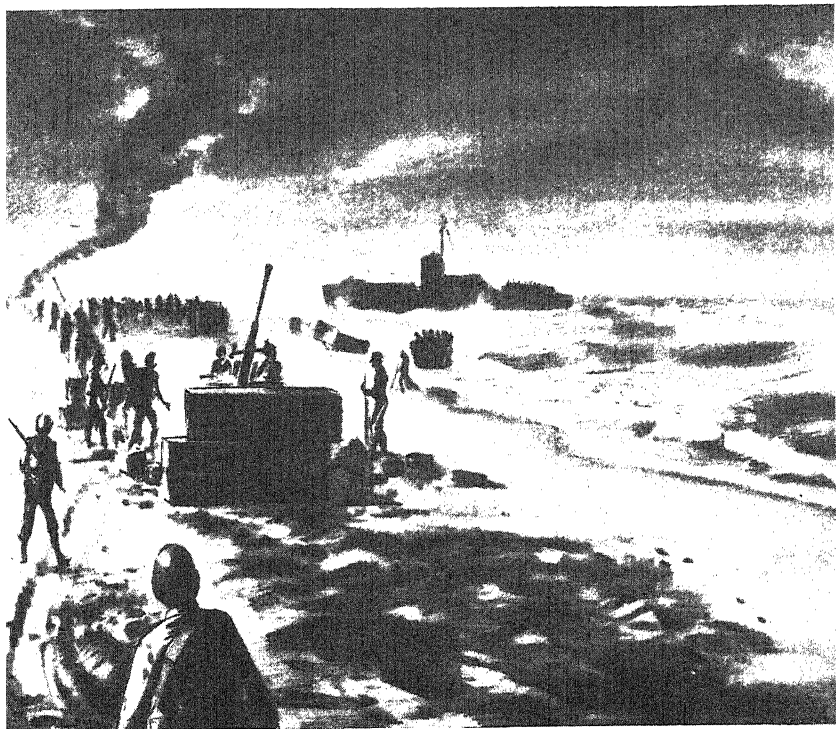
That's good news to sleep on. And the Chief of Staff urges that you do sleep, your duties permitting, and sleep as long as possible. You deserve that sleep and may need it tonight. It should be a happy sleep.



Russo

Amphibious Landing





Defending the Beaches

Russo



20. *Sunset Roundup*

(INVASION NEWS)

7:15 P.M., *July 10*

Herewith, after giving you a day of well-earned rest, some news you have helped to make.

Admiral Hewitt, in a dispatch to Admiral Cunningham, reported that the Sicilian beaches assaulted by the three American Task Forces were firmly held, that one of these beaches was found to be heavily mined, and that at Gela the pier was wrecked, its center section missing. Unloading was said to have been slowed by a cross-swell and the time needed to silence enemy batteries. . . . Admiral Hewitt reported that enemy air action was light, but that the destroyer *Maddox* was sunk by dive-bombers early this morning. He said that the paratroop operation had been successfully accomplished, and that gunfire support from our ships had been engaging enemy tank reinforcements from inland.

The news from the British or eastern Sicilian front is all good. One rumor is that the British are already eight miles inland.

At 2 o'clock the town of Vittoria surrendered to the 2nd and 3rd Battalions. A number of prisoners (some say 300) have been captured.

At 2:15 Scoglitti was taken by the 1st Battalion of the 179th, which afterwards went on to Vittoria to join up with the 2nd and 3rd Battalions.

Gela is said to have fallen, and fallen the more easily because

SUNSET ROUNDUP

Italian soldiers there took advantage of payday to drink a little more than necessary.

The Second Division's 179th Battalion is now moving on to the Comiso airfield.

During the afternoon several Messerschmitts have been harassing the area. Two of these shot down a plane from one of our cruisers in an action so unevenly matched that it was sickening to watch.

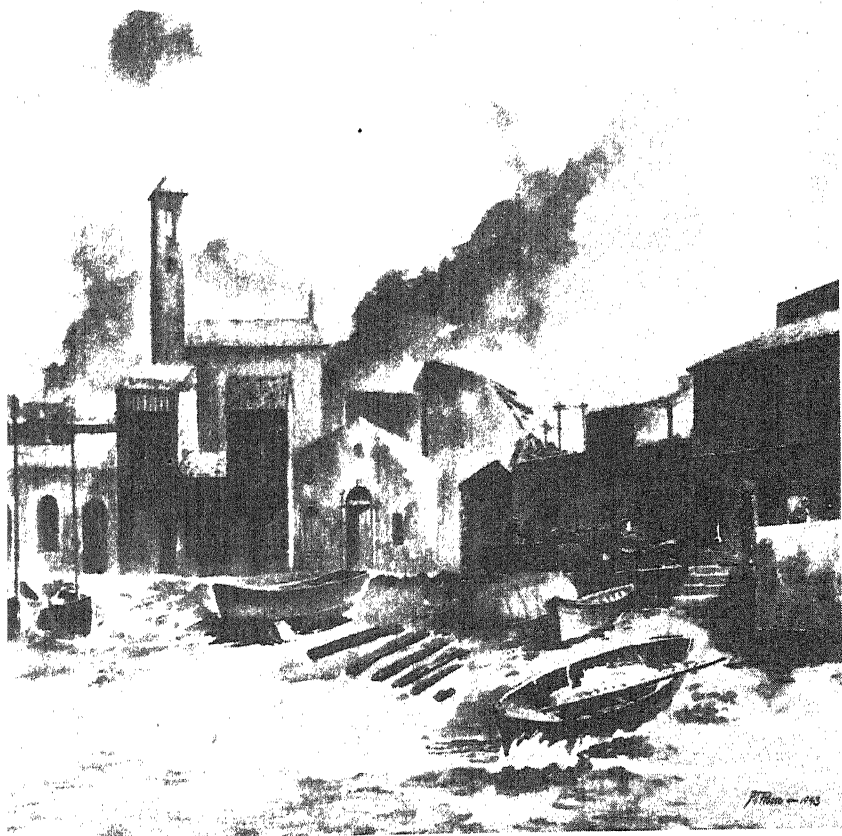
Colonel Jeschke reported this afternoon, after having spent the day on the beaches between Scoglitti and the Giglio River, that the casualties were slight. The Colonel also said he had seen some barbed-wire entanglements. Also some thirty Italian prisoners, all of them happy.

General Bradley reveals that the 1st Division has contacted the paratroops. The 1st Division, according to the General, has encountered heavy opposition from about thirty German tanks. The paratroops appear to have had a hard time of it.

During the day the unloading of the transports and supply ships has been carried forward with great skill and dispatch.

The BBC devoted most of its 1 o'clock broadcast this afternoon to the Sicilian invasion. Although hazy as to details, it said that everything was going according to plan, and spoke of the British, Americans, and Canadians fighting side by side.

BBC also reported a very large English air attack last night on the Ruhr and said the fighting along the Russian front had been heavy. By tomorrow we should have more detailed news from this and other fronts, including Sicily.



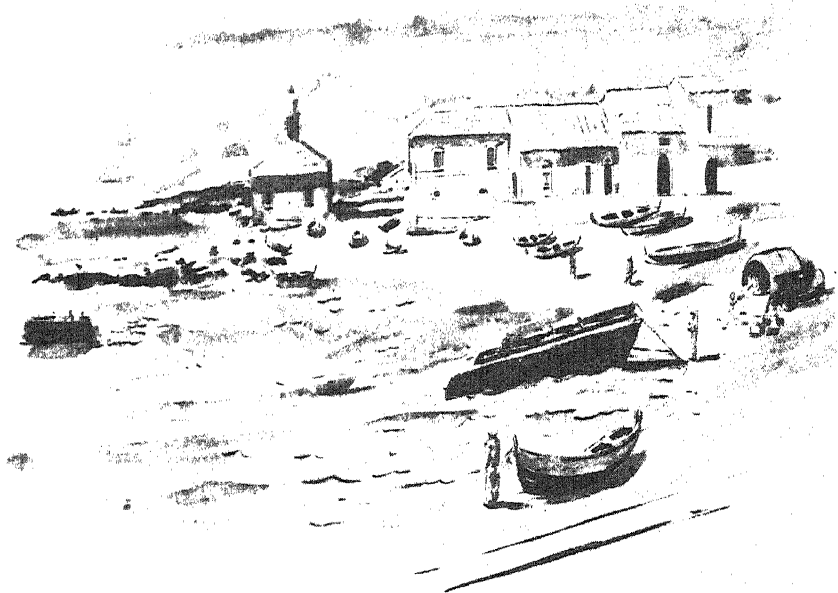
Russo

Scoglitti



Vaiksnoras

Where War Has Been



Bostick

Scoglitti's Harbor

21. *On the Beaches*

July 11

The city of Ragusa has fallen to us, and at 6:30 this afternoon Comiso airfield was captured. The leading elements of our invading forces from the 45th Division are from twelve to fifteen miles inland by now. Some of our other troops, notably the 1st Division, are progressing in spite of stiff opposition. By last night some 5500 German and Italian prisoners had been taken. This we know definitely. From Scoglitti comes a rumor, unverified though perhaps symptomatic, which says that when we took the town we did so with the loss of only one American while 300 Italians were killed. Up until 10 this morning less than 250 injured were reported in this particular Task Force. Near us during the day a British monitor has been pounding away with ominous regularity, her big guns trained on an enemy tank concentration inland.

Of immediate concern to us all is the progress of the unloading of the transports and supply ships. The reports continue to be excellent. One transport is 100 per cent cleared. Most of the other ships are getting through a difficult job rapidly. Our air attacks on Sicilian airfields continue like an unbroken serial. A flight of eighteen B-17's passed this area, headed inland to drop their loads on enemy air centers. AA gunners with itchy fingers appear to have controlled their desire to shoot at the first plane in sight. Our air cover of Spitfires now patrols without every ship in the harbor sending up clouds of flak in appreciation. One of these patrolling Spits at about 11 A.M. this morning scored a kill on a low-flying Messerschmitt that had dodged his way in to drop bombs on the beach near Scoglitti. Earlier this morning two German bombers—JU-88's—were hit and believed to have been shot down. We had some bad moments this afternoon when several German planes swept toward the convoy and were successfully

ON THE BEACHES

engaged by three Spitfires. Another uncomfortable few minutes came for the *Spelvin* when a JU-88 was spotted directly above us, at an altitude of 25,000 feet. Some say bombs were dropped; all agree that Spitfires drove off the JU-88.

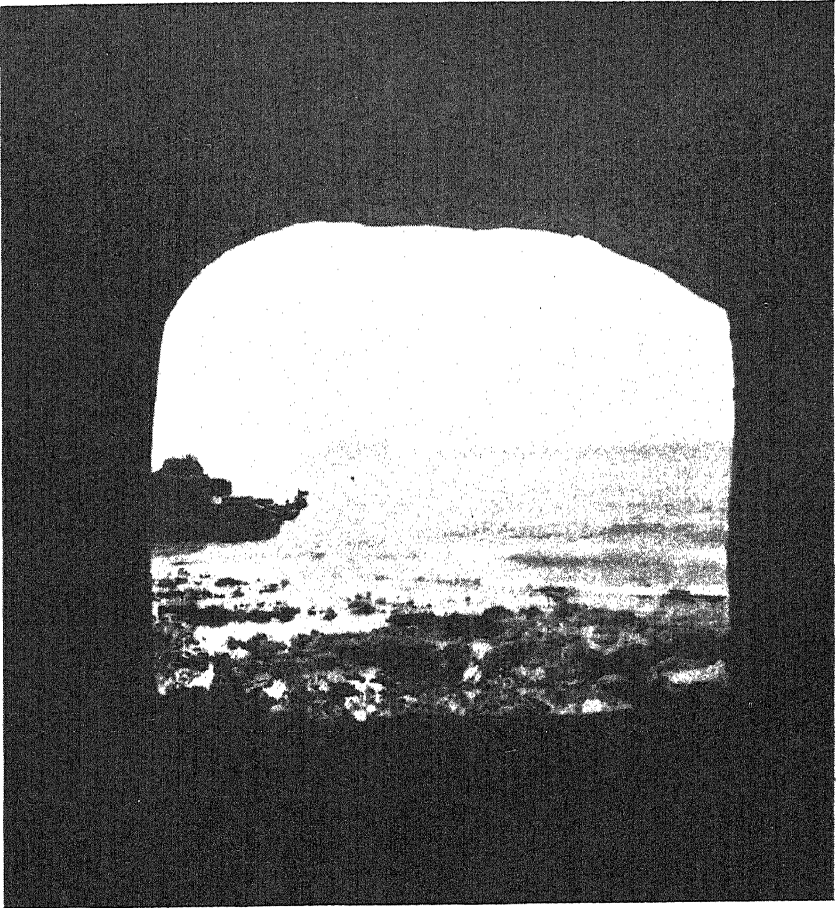
Yesterday the Italians gave us the bird. And a very nice bird. At 9:47 P.M. a tired enemy carrier pigeon flew down to rest on one of our mine sweepers. It proved to be a comforting bird-in-the-hand. The pigeon was carrying a message from the Italian Army's 206th Division to the Italian 12th Army Corps. When translated, the message read:

"Situation 3:00 P.M.—12 o'clock Croce Camerina about to fall. . . . Col. Bartimo resisting. . . . After fifteen hours of struggle, infantrymen and artillerymen are resolutely doing their duty against overwhelming forces and means. Hundreds of anchored ships unloading material undisturbed. Our aviation absent. I have ordered shot two soldiers of the fixed defense of Pachino for being out of presence of the enemy and in civilian clothes. Please send requested pigeons."

Those hundreds of anchored ships mentioned by the Italian bird-lover remind me that as a Force we look even more imposing from the beaches than we do when seen from our own decks. As one who spent the better part of the morning and the afternoon ashore, may I make a report?

Although Scoglitti itself is a gray little town when you approach it, it whitens strangely as you enter its heat and dust. As a town, it is another of those places calculated to give comfort to the Chamber of Commerce in Norfolk. Today it was filled mainly by very sunburned, very wrinkled old people; these old people *and* American soldiers. A few little children were playing in the narrow streets, and sometimes wandering into the public square. One of our soldiers, when asked where the younger men were, told me he thought a few might still be hidden in their one-story homes. A house-to-house search, said this soldier, will not begin until tomorrow night.

The beach of Scoglitti is difficult even for our small landing boats, but it is littered with fishing craft. They are scattered



Our Task Force Seen from an Italian Gun Emplacement



Ambassador Without Portfolio

ON THE BEACHES .

there as if driven in by some other storm than our coming. At the water's edge they wait for their owners, like shoes in a dead man's closet. Barbed wire is to be seen at either side of the main beach. The houses appear to be made of clay; clay and the heavy white dust which the decades have deposited on them. The only color in this gray-white town comes from a surprised pink bush—perhaps acacia—which can occasionally be spotted behind a high white wall.

The inhabitants of Scoglitti are cheerful. The old people wave or salute, and gather in groups to discuss in a dazed way what has happened to them and their families, and to scrutinize the American soldiers who are in amiable possession of the place. The children's black eyes burn with curiosity. Their little faces are pinched. Although they are older than children's faces ought to be, they become childlike again when they smile their thanks for a taste of chocolate or Field Rations. Or accept a cigarette for their elders. Timid as they are, their voices are music.

In one cool, tiled, and grubby Public Building, where some of our soldiers were lounging, a photograph of little King Victor Emmanuel loomed large on the wall, making up in size for what it lacked in strength, and proving once again that the camera can lie. There were staccato military and governmental proclamations on many houses; proclamations which, though so recently written and read, seemed old and forgotten enough today to have been stumbled upon in excavations by an antiquary.

Near the main square was a pile of Italian soldiers' equipment—rifles, helmets, bayonets, razor blades, knapsacks, letters, etc. The pile was diminishing rapidly, but most of its contents will be seen again—in twos or threes—in quite a few American homes.

Fewer houses in Scoglitti had been destroyed than might have been expected. Even so, there were plenty of walls which bared their wounds. A considerable number of Italian*prisoners had been rounded up in the main square, though before I

ON THE BEACHES

got there they had been moved away. All of them are said to have been in excellent spirits, and to have looked forward to "K" rations.

One of these Italians is reported to have laughed at his American guard, "Buddy, you're going the wrong way. I'm headed for New York!"

If Scoglitti was quiet, almost to the point of having been abandoned, the beaches on both sides of it hummed with activity. Imagine a freight yard full of freight but without trains, and a traffic jam where there is no street, and you, whose business may have kept you aboard the *Spelvin*, may have some notion of what those stretches of hot sand resemble.

On a beach about two miles west of Scoglitti I saw jeeps, trucks, DUKW's, and reconnaissance cars scurrying busily back and forth through acres of ammunition, provisions, etc. Incidentally, I saw one crate marked "MEDALS" in big red letters, and then more alarmingly in black, "Purple Hearts."

On the beach it was inferno-hot. Many of the soldiers between chores were taking quick swims. Our Seabees were working beaver-wise to level the sand, and the beginnings of one of those chicken-coop-wire roads had already been put in smooth running order.

The beach, a shallow and most treacherous one because of its double-chin of reefs, was fringed with a number of landing craft—stranded, flooded, and abandoned—while countless LST's were nosing bravely shoreward to unload. Two of the LST's near Lieutenant Burton and me had been hit and slightly damaged by enemy bombs this morning. An antiaircraft gun crew right next to us kept scanning the sky, their gun rising, falling, and circling, drawn as if by a magnet to cover any approaching plane.

We saw one enemy plane brought down in a stream of smoke; saw it spin earthward in sick circles, all the lightness abruptly gone out of it, and all the life, too. It dropped like a bird, weighted down by death; wounded, heavy, losing even its fight for grace; struggling in vain with its wings to main-



Surf's Toll



A Jeep in a Mine Field

ON THE BEACHES

tain its place in the element which its machines now denied it, until a billow of smoke behind the low hills announced how fiercely the earth had reclaimed it. When we were heading once more for the *Spelvin* in our landing craft, we saw a bomb spill from another enemy plane, as perfunctorily as a mail sack might be tossed from an express train on the platform of a local stop. Apparently this plane dropped its bomb after it had been hit, because almost before the bomb exploded the plane quivered down to a precipitous landing within our lines.

A single thread of barbed wire was stretched just back of the beach. In the forty-foot strip of land behind this barbed wire was a mine field which had been cleared away. It was scheduled to be detonated sometime this afternoon. The mines, with the sand dug away from them, looked as innocent as water caps along a street. But their lack of innocence was established by a solitary jeep which had raced over the first ridge, landed to its sorrow on a mine, discharged it, and thus cost the driver his seat.

Several soldiers said that the Sicilians they had talked to were completely surprised when this invasion force appeared. They had been told we had no Navy and no transports left. Then in the darkness of the night they heard great guns booming. When the dawn came they saw more ships than they had ever seen before. Yes, and more Americans.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Washington*) President Roosevelt sent the following message to Pope Pius XII yesterday: "By the time this message reaches your Holy City, invasion in force by American and British troops will have come to rid Italy of Fascism and all its symbols, and to drive out the Nazi oppressors who are infesting her soil." The President added, "There is no need for me to reaffirm that respect for religious beliefs and for the free exercise of religious worship is fundamental to our ideas. Churches and religious institutions will, to the extent that it is within our power, be spared the devastation of war during the struggle ahead."

22. *Breakfast Roundup*

(THE WORLD OUTSIDE)

6:10 A.M., July 12

Needless to say no ship's *News Bulletin* will be mimeographed today. Hence this early morning substitute. Tired as we are, we cannot help our interest. We have a right to be curious. General Eisenhower's Headquarters announced yesterday that the Allies were advancing at all points along a hundred-mile coastal area in Sicily as American parachute troops battled for an inland objective. "With our beaches firmly held and our troops advancing, the Allied Navies' most important task during the day was the landing of troops with their vehicles, guns, fuel, equipment, and stores."

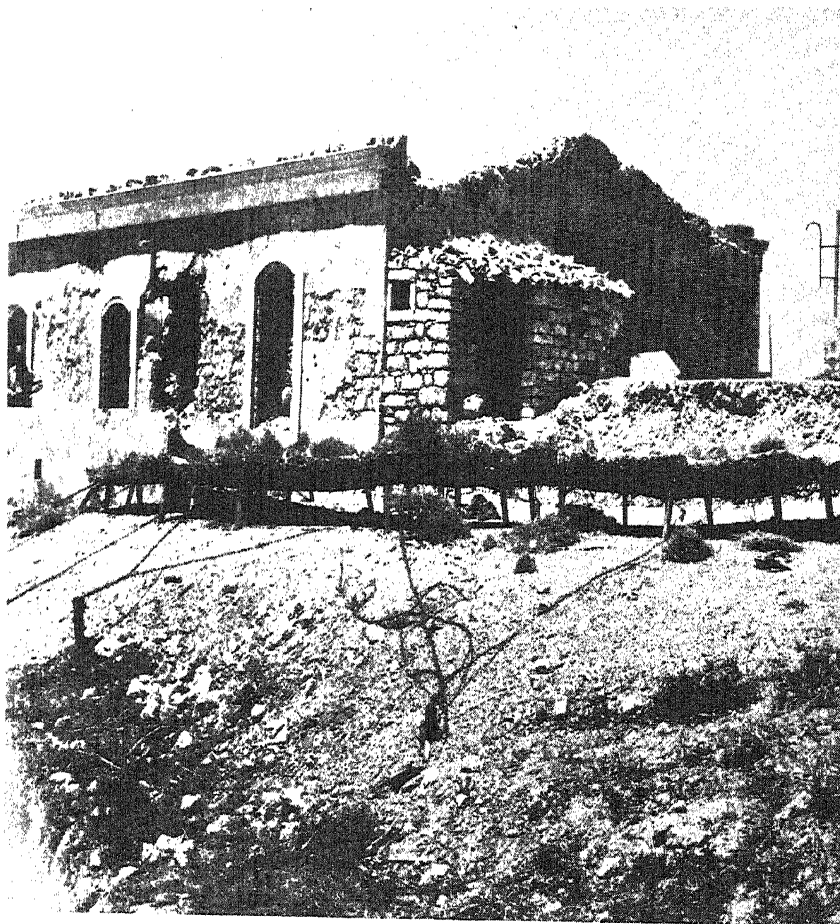
A communiqué disclosed that Gela, to our west, was the first town to be attacked. As the American troops landed, Allied warships opened heavy fire on an enemy tank column coming toward Gela. The identity of this Axis armored unit which attempted unsuccessfully to drive the American landing party into the sea was not disclosed, but it was believed to have been German.

"Although few details have yet come in, it is clear our operations against Sicily continue to go according to plan," said the Allied communiqué. "Information as regards to casualties is not yet available. But it is believed they have been slight."

A Stockholm dispatch quoted reports from Axis capitals as saying that the Allied invaders had landed at seven points in Sicily after establishing air superiority which isolated the island.



Unloading



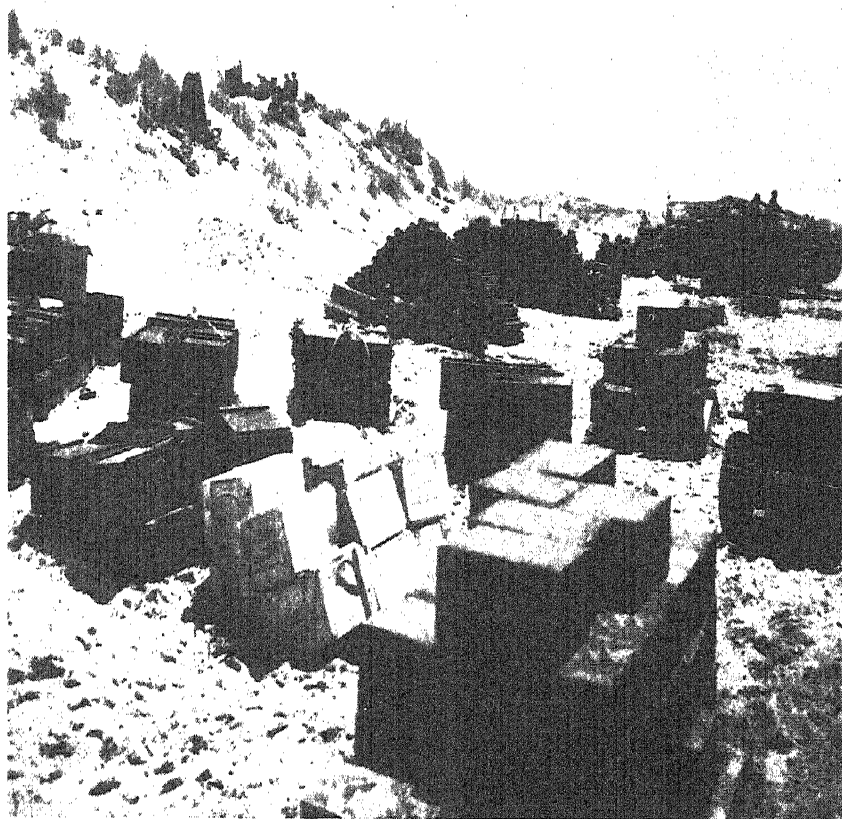
Scars of War

BREAKFAST ROUNDUP

Although few details were contained in Sunday's communiqué, they serve to round out the picture of "the gigantic operation in which synchronized land, sea, and air forces carried out their tasks with the precision of a watch."

(*London*) A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, praised Allied seamen Sunday for the "wonderful feat" in taking "the largest armada of merchant ships and naval craft" across the Mediterranean. (*London*) Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson arrived in London yesterday from Washington, less than forty-eight hours after the invasion of Sicily began. The assumption was that his visit was connected with coming moves against the Axis in Europe. Among the authorities with whom Mr. Stimson will confer is Lieutenant General Jacob L. Devers, American Commander in the European Theatre of Operations.

(*Algiers*) "Three Sicilian airfields are now in our hands. All first immediate objectives are believed to have been taken. . . . The main body of enemy forces has not yet been met." (*Allied Headquarters, North Africa*) The total count of ships used in the Sicilian invasion exceeded by more than one thousand the number of vessels used to transport the Allied Invasion Forces to North Africa last November. (*Moscow*) Despite their week-old attempts, the Germans have failed to make any important advances in the Belgorod sector. (*Chungking*) The Chinese are hailing the Allied invasion of Sicily as a new blow toward shortening the war. The *Daily News* of Chungking declared that eventually Allied operations in the Mediterranean will have their effect upon the Far East. Madame Chiang Kai-shek also expressed her pleasure at being informed of the Sicilian operation.



Ammunition Dump



Movement of Ammunition on Beach



Old Sicily, New Wounds

23. *Off Scoglitti*

July 12

On Invasion Night the enemy did not know exactly where we were. They may even have been surprised by our coming. Last night the coin was to a certain extent flipped the other way. The Germans and the Italians knew exactly where we were. It was hard, if not impossible, for us to locate their airmen in the low-hung gray clouds. From time to time only the mad hornet's buzz of their machines could be heard as they zoomed uncomfortably near. Or their many flares could be seen lanterning the sky with terror. Or their bombs could be watched as they splashed close by in the Mediterranean or exploded on the beach.

Just after dinner—at 7:50—the Task Force to the west underwent a heavy bombardment. This bombardment rumbled ahead of us like a storm sweeping down a valley. No enemy planes could be seen from our bridge, but our ears ached from the thunder of antiaircraft guns. Tracer bullets raced across the heaven, pursuing one another as if discharged from a giant's Roman candle.

By 8:10 P.M. some Messerschmitts roared shoreward to bomb the beaches. They were followed by Spitfires. Then the shore batteries began to erupt. When they were in full eruption the *Spelvin* shook for the first of many times last night; shook as if it were a muffled gong struck once but accurately. The mystery of those disquieting single quavers remains unexplained. Some said they overtook us because of mines detonating in Italian mine fields. Others said they were due to action by

OFF SCOGLITTI

Mount Etna. Still others wondered if enemy submarines could possibly be responsible for them.

Smoke began to pour forth at about this time on the horizon; the kind of smoke which, though man-made, might be expected to curl from the cone of an awakened volcano. This smoke, that turned as the evening darkened into a long-lasting fire, was presumed to come from one of the LST's in the Task Force to the west which had been struck by a bomb.

At 8:35 P.M. word reached us of a flash seen from a shore gun, and there was the sound of a blast in the water near us.

At 8:59 P.M. a big fountain of flame splashed skyward on the beach astern of us.

At 9:37 P.M. the *Spelvin* shook again; quivered mysteriously once more, as it was to do at irregular intervals throughout the night.

Meanwhile the enemy planes had moved forward from the Task Force to the west and were lavishing their attentions upon us. They raced towards us, dots grown into hawks, mechanized and merciless and seemingly as swift in their flight as the raising of binoculars.

Their flares, supported by parachutes, and consisting of round lights dropped dynastically from round lights above, made us feel naked at noon in the black of night. They turned us into illuminated targets; sitting ducks; "bomb-bait," as Clark Lee had once phrased it. While we were waiting for what would follow, unconscious of breathing, the antiaircraft of our Task Force guns had roared at once into action; at one moment sending tracer bullets arching from all sides above us, until they formed the nave of a Gothic cathedral made of neon. The flak showered the near-by water. One piece of it sounded as if it were pinging its way through the steel tracery of our forward mast. Some of it sprayed the *Spelvin's* gun deck, as everyone aboard must by now know, wounding eleven of our men, two of them seriously.

Meanwhile an enemy plane, heading for one of our cruisers, was shot down in the water some 1500 feet to port. Its wreck-



Broached Landing Craft



Road Builders

OFF SCOGLITTI

age blazed there on the surface for quite a while. Another alleged enemy plane was reported downed, again at sea; and two other enemy planes were shot down on the beach, burning there in the blackness for an unconscionable time.

Occasionally the shore line was brightened by a large blast, followed by a loud explosion.

The moon, which did not set until nearly 3, mocked us by its beauty. It was the kind of moon which in normal times would have made even an alto hermit ache to sing a duet with a soprano. In this unsentimental present, it must be described, with all the peril to beauty and life for which the phrase stands, as a "bomber's moon." It gave some aid and comfort to the enemy by lighting the convoy even when the enemy's flares at overlong last went out.

Our own 5-inch gun fore blazed away several times during a night when silence was the exception, and the noise golden. At one point, when an enemy plane was reported over us—perhaps at the very moment when one bomb had come perilously close to one of our transports and another had raised a small geyser in the water near us—our friendly ships became so ardent in their protection of us that some of their lateral fire fell on us.

On the gun deck, starboard side and abaft of the twin 20-millimeter gun tub, one friendly but over-zealous 20-millimeter shell nosed its way unexploded into the deck and stayed there until after luncheon today, when it was removed and buried at sea. Another of these friendly 20-millimeters landed unexpectedly in Boat 13, destroying the distributor.

As if all this were not enough, there was even a rumor at about 1 o'clock in the morning that some German E-boats were approaching. Fortunately they did not. Or rather, unfortunately, from the point of view of some of our gunners, who would have liked to have had a go at them.

No one minded seeing the sun rise this morning. More than being a relief, daylight was an ally.

I know whereof I speak when I mention this transport shot

OFF SCOGLITTI

down during the night, because I had the pleasure of lunching today with Flight Officer Douglas C. Moore, who, with Flight Officer Anthony J. Halas, is now aboard the *Spelvin*. Both of them came here to receive medical treatment.

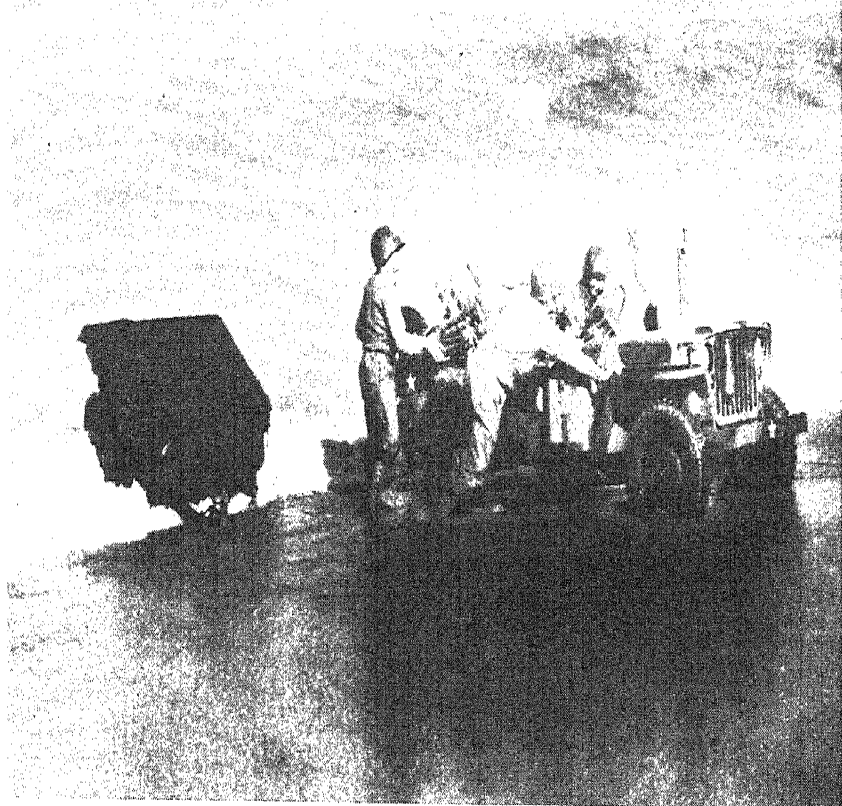
Flight Officer Moore's head was bloody but unbowed as he talked. He is a young man, twenty-two last month. He has been in the Air Corps a year and a half, and had flown only once before then, as a passenger, of course. Flight Officer Moore is air-struck, however. In spite of last night's unpleasantness, his hopes are centered on getting a new plane soon.

Last night he said that he, Flight Officer Halas, Radio Operator Herbert Triik, and Staff Sergeant Youhaz—the transport's four survivors—had flown four or five miles into Sicily, had dropped their paratroopers at 8:59 P.M. and were heading out when, between 11:30 P.M. and 11:40 P.M., the trouble began. He is not certain they should have been where they were. He admits they were inviting difficulties. In any case, as they lighted their recognition flares and came over the water to the American ships, hell broke loose. Suddenly they found themselves the center of fire from eight vessels.

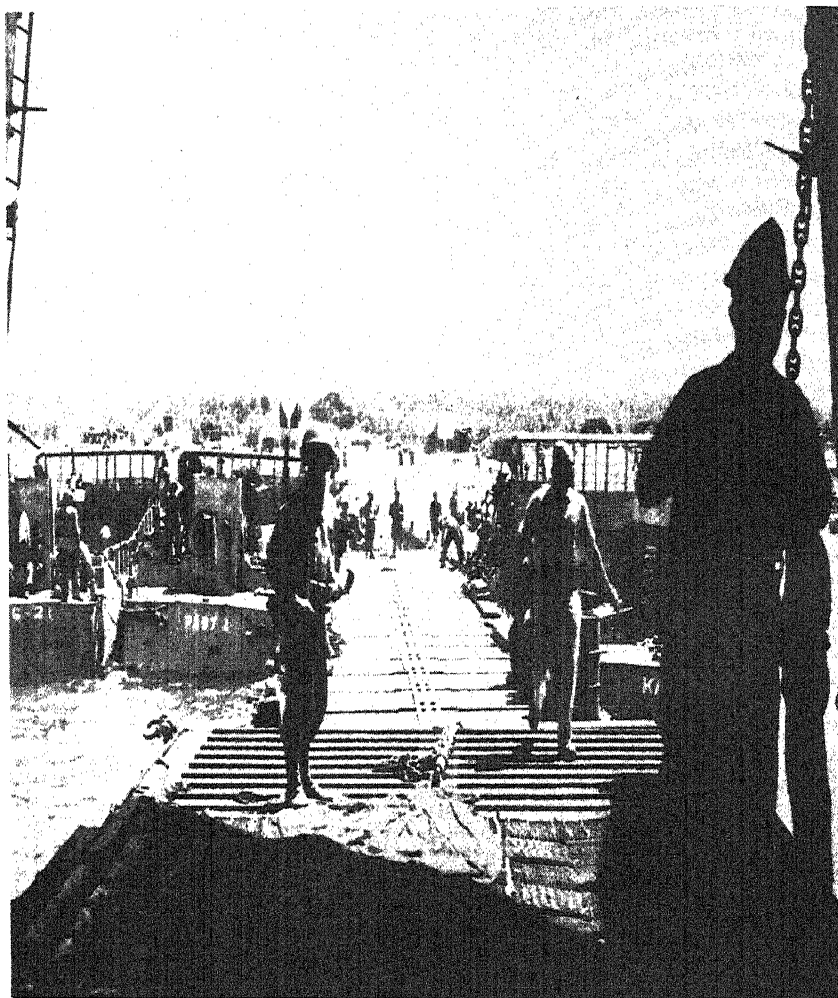
Flight Officer Moore says the plane was hit thirty or forty times before it crashed. As for himself he remembers a terrific explosion under his pilot's seat before being thrown against the windshield. He remembers, too, finding all the instruments in his lap. How he was rescued he does not recall. He knows only that the plane had five rubber life boats, four of which were blown up, and that he and his three companions were saved in the fifth. He lost consciousness as soon as he reached it; indeed he does not remember walking toward it or reaching it at all.

Now for a quick summary of such reports as have reached us today from the Sicilian front.

The British took Syracuse last night and their line is now said to stretch from there to Ispica. The Canadians to our east are moving toward Ragusa and plan to gain the high ground north of that line today. Syracuse, incidentally, is reported to



Jeep in the Surf



Looking Beachward from an LST

OFF SCOGLITTI

have been captured on "D" day by the British, with only slight damage to the harbor.

The floating reserve, lying seaward of the three American Task Forces which occupied these southern beaches, has landed and is entering action between the 1st and 45th Divisions. It consists in great part of armored troops.

The 1st and 3rd Division fronts are said to remain much the same as described here yesterday.

According to corps reports the 45th Division made the best advance of all the divisions yesterday.

As you know the Comiso airfield was taken at 2:30 P.M. yesterday. Today the following message was received by our Naval Air Officers from the Air Liaison officer with the 157th Infantry. "The airfield itself," reads the message, "was found to be serviceable enough, except at the northeast corner of the runway. It was repaired yesterday by engineers so that fighters could use it. The runway is being lengthened for heavy bombers. The number of aircraft captured at Comiso was 120, of which some 28 were still serviceable." Altogether quite an agreeable haul, especially when you consider that several hundred plywood belly-tanks were also captured.

The 180th Combat Team has had a hard task capturing the Piscari airfield, which is defended by one of Hermann Goering's crack regiments.

While ashore this morning Admiral Kirk, General Middleton, Captain Mitchell, Colonel Jeschke, Colonel Burkart, Colonel Smyser, Lieutenant Hope, and Marine Corporal Marker, after being covered with the dry white dust of southern Sicily, found themselves almost at the spot where a large German bomb tumbled down from the sky to explode.

Incidentally, Admiral Kirk temporarily transferred his flag at 4:30 this afternoon to one of our destroyers. The Admiral will remain off Scoglitti with the few convoys and supply ships still unloaded, while the *Spelvin* will proceed back to an African port in a convoy which, for the time being, will be commanded by Commodore Phillips.



Italian Casualty



Sicilian Roadside

OFF SCOGLITTI

Due to the fact that there is so much interference and jamming from enemy radios in this vicinity, it has been impossible to gather outside news this evening.

One item, however, has been collected. It should be of special interest. From a German radio program we learn that we are on a ship which was sunk two days ago, along with three of our near-by transports that are still afloat. Hence I trust you are doubly surprised to be sailing again tonight.

24. *Up Anchor*

July 13

After all these months of preparation, these weeks of mounting suspense, and those three brief but long, crowded, and unforgettable days and nights off Scoglitti, we left Sicily last night. For us, as front line participants, the Sicilian invasion was over. Some of us came away with a few poor trophies. All of us took away our memories; memories that will grow into tales; tales that will grow faster than poplars and taller than the tallest redwoods.

We left Sicily in the kind of sunset that should have supplied a tourist with a postcard evening. The hills, the clouds, the distant mountains, and the splash of reds in the sky suggested a traveler's paradise. Yet, as if to remind us of what we had been through and why, we were given a martial farewell. At 8:15 P.M. a bomb had dropped on the beach ahead of us, after some anti-aircraft had blurted out. The spot where the bomb fell was marked by a billowing cloud of smoke and a burst of flame, as if an ammunition dump had been hit. From inland, as we turned to go, came the rumble of heavy fighting.

Some of us felt guilty about leaving. We knew how the Army men on those contested beaches must feel as they saw us, their one connection with home, pull out. Our ships, as ships, were conscienceless. As they swung into the single line we joined, they seemed almost as glad to be going home as horses heading for their stables.

Due to the Admiral's transfer to the destroyer from which he will supervise the unloading of the few remaining vessels, we are no longer the flagship. We are just another ship in a

UP ANCHOR

large convoy that has done its Naval duty. Yet having been the flagship there was—and is—something about the *Spelvin* suggestive of a president, out of office, looking forward to a second term.

At 8:45 P.M. a searchlight blinked at us from the shore. Inescapably, it set us all to thinking back to those three, inquisitive, far-spaced enemy beacons which scraped the sky and looked as if they had found us out before "H" hour. So strong was the sense of relief on the *Spelvin* yesterday afternoon that the gun deck was crowded with officers and men, leaning against the rails, smoking, talking, playing with Lieutenant Herbert Avram's puppy, of quorum ancestry, and laughing in as relaxed a fashion as if we were excursionists. At 8:50 P.M. some shooting at a mine reported off the port bow of a transport snapped us back into the reality so close to us in time, and even, until we reach home, so close to us in space.

Why did we leave Sicily so abruptly? Because our business was done; because our troops were landed; because the ships now with us in this convoy were unloaded; because these ships were too valuable to be left around, needlessly exposed to enemy bombers and subs in perilous waters. Our immediate usefulness was over. Once emptied of their cargo and their men, our transports anchored at Scoglitti would only have invited waste.

Are we tired just now? We have never been so tired before. We did not know how tired, until it was all over. We have been under something of a nervous strain. We won't mind sleeping. Because, let's not fool ourselves, the climax so long awaited in the Margaret Mitchell-length of these months of preparation is over. But don't forget some 3000 sea miles still lie between us and home.

Toward midnight last night, when most of us were in our sacks, others remained topside to look back on the Sicily we were leaving. These report that by weighing anchor we may have missed another such evening as the one we went through on the 11th. The sky over Sicily, they say, was once again



Watching for German Planes



Fighting the Soft Sand

UP ANCHOR

filled with tracer bullets. Once again enemy planes must have been in action.

Naturally the talk on the *Spelvin* continues to center on what did happen there, what is happening there, and what will happen in Sicily. At noon today BBC said there was no official news. It repeated this statement on its 4 o'clock round-up. Dispatches from correspondents reaching London today did, however, indicate that the British Forces under General Montgomery are advancing north of Syracuse, and that the Americans (this means us, in case you have forgotten) are pushing forward in their sectors.

General Eisenhower is reported to have made a flying visit to the Invasion Area. "I am satisfied with progress," said he, "both inland and on the beaches." General Eisenhower visited General Patton and his troops.

BBC also announced today, "It is too early to describe the magnificent part the combined British and American Navy played in the invasion of Sicily." One bomber pilot, who must have been heading toward Scoglitti, said he could see a terrific antiaircraft barrage thrown up by naval vessels when he was still ninety miles at sea. A communiqué from Allied Force Headquarters, North Africa, reveals that our bombers yesterday continued heavy attacks on enemy troop columns and communication lines, destroying large numbers of enemy transports.

One of our Army officers aboard the *Spelvin*, Major Robert Clifford, who spent most of his time ashore in Sicily, reports that a captured Italian colonel was enormously helpful in explaining to the Americans the Italian plans for the defense of the island. Major Clifford also says that the Hermann Goering Division, which has caused our 1st Division much trouble, has about two hundred tanks, known as "Tigers," copied after the big Russian tanks and equipped with new weapons.

According to Major Clifford, most of the Italian soldiers captured went to one of two extremes. Either they expected to be shot, or, as was in most cases true, they were as happy as

UP ANCHOR

children. Our soldiers have shared their provisions with their prisoners and given them cigarettes before being asked for any. Apparently there have been quite a few snipers. These are not taken prisoner. They are shot when seen. Or grenades are tossed into the buildings where they hide. The Germans, reports Major Clifford, did a beautiful job for our Fighters when they built the airfield at Comiso which we have captured. The main runway was expected to be ready for our use in a very short time.

News Flash! We have just been passing the North African harbor where, a short time back, but very long ago, we saw the Allied armada gathering its strength.



Admiral Kirk and General Middleton Meet Ashore



Italian Prisoners—Scoglitti

25. *Life and Letters*

We should be once again alongside the jetty at — By 9 tomorrow morning. I say "should be," because almost all of us, since our appointment off Scoglitti, have fooled ourselves into believing that we are again at peace in a peaceful world.

Fatigue and a strong, because natural, sense of anticlimax have persuaded us to accept this delusion as Gideon truth. After dinner we have begun to assemble on the gun deck in a mood as carefree as if we were waiting for a movie in America. In our relief at being whole and at having those nights off the beaches of southern Sicily behind us, we treat these mined waters of the Mediterranean as if both they and we were already becalmed within protecting U. S. shores.

We *are* on our way home. We *are* retracing our wake. We *do* belong in the Department of Anticlimax. Yet without playing crepe hanger, permit me to remind you—and me—of how very dangerous these very same waters seemed to us all less than a week ago. Allow me to point out that we are still some 3000 miles from home, and that there is a vast difference between going home and having got there.

May I recall to you that yesterday we did pass some floating enemy mines? And, plum of plums in this sour pudding, may I reveal to you that even while I was gargling the news to you from this microphone yesterday afternoon, a PC boat cut in to the *Spelvin* off our starboard bow to signal we were at that moment passing over the spot where an enemy submarine was believed to have been sunk by this same PC boat. As at

LIFE AND LETTERS

least partial verification of this report, a large oil slick close by was sighted from the Navigation Bridge.

Now to subjects pleasanter. One phase of our invasion of Sicily has almost passed unnoticed. I mean the work—the brave and daring work—done by our Scouts and Raiders, those men in the Amphibious Force who, to meet the challenge of their duties, must function as a perfect navigator, an American Indian on the warpath, and a Commando working scientifically in this age of *Popular Mechanics*.

We have one of these Scouts aboard the *Spelvin*—Scout Coordinator, Ensign Robert Halperin. While the rest of us were lying at anchor in our position off Scoglitti, waiting impatiently for “H” hour and watching those enemy beacons probe the sky, Ensign Halperin and his crew of Scouts were already on the hostile shore. They were reconnoitering, surveying the beaches, selecting the best places towards which to direct the incoming landing craft, and marking these places for the boats to come to.

Ensign Halperin, a tall, dark-haired, quiet giant of a man; a former Notre Dame football star and a one-time “pro” on the Brooklyn Dodgers, traveled with us across the ocean. At our African port he was transferred to a transport, and has subsequently returned to us. When the transports arrived at anchorage, Halperin was making last-minute checks on his boat and crew. They were to be the first ones in.

At 1 A.M. Ensign Halperin set out, heading for Point Zafalone, Sicily, some four and a half miles from his transport. After locating the point, Ensign Halperin changed his course and turned in a northwesterly direction along the shore line. Judging distance from sea to shore is hard enough in daylight. Darkness shakes the judgment even of an expert. But Halperin figured his distance this way: so many revolutions of the boat propeller per minute mean such-and-such a distance. Knowing the propeller revolutions at a certain engine speed and the distance to be traveled, all that was required was an accurate watch. This was on hand. For exactly nineteen minutes the



The Army Starts Inland



Roundup of Prisoners—Scoglitti

LIFE AND LETTERS

Scout Boat kept on course at regular speed. This placed her, in spite of the darkness, in the desired position, eight hundred yards from shore.

"H" hour, you may recall, was delayed a short while. Ensign Halperin and his crew had no way of knowing this. At the previously appointed time for "H" hour he began signaling the landing craft. No response. For an hour and ten minutes the Scout Boat waited there, always in imminent danger of detection by enemy eyes, hence enemy batteries, ashore.

At last the first waves of men began to land on the beach marked for them. When the destroyers and the cruisers opened fire at "H" hour, the Scout Boat could almost feel the heat of the passing salvos. When the heat was less visible, in other words at dawn, the Scout party began a hydrographic survey of the beaches, selecting landing spots for the large LCI(L)'s and the LST's. At 6, Ensign Halperin's boat again found itself under fire, this time quite heavily. One hit carried away the boat's radio antenna, and a second hit wounded the engineer. Ensign Halperin administered First Aid and carried the man back to his transport.

Thereafter Halperin was ordered to supervise the landing of the LCI(L)'s. Accompanying the division leader of the first LCI(L), he guided the craft to the marked position on the beach. Nearly two hundred men stepped out on dry sand without even wetting their feet. With the position thus marked, the rest of the personnel boats came in and unloaded their troops.*

Ensign Halperin leads me to another true adventure; one that occurred on the beach and in the air near Scoglitti. Surely many months are apt to pass before the war yields another such tale, in which facts, seeming so fictional, turn out to be real. This yarn I have had from two Army Officers aboard the

* On his return home Ensign Halperin was promoted to a full lieutenantcy. For his "extraordinary heroism and distinguished service in action" during the African invasion last November, Halperin had already been awarded the Navy Cross.

LIFE AND LETTERS

Spelvin. One of these is Colonel E. Burkart, who was mystified—as who would not be?—when from the *Spelvin's* bridge he saw the incident taking place at too great a distance to observe its baffling details. My other source of information is Colonel Cleaves, who has verified the tale, talked with its principal character, and forwarded the official report to General Middleton at the 45th Division Headquarters.

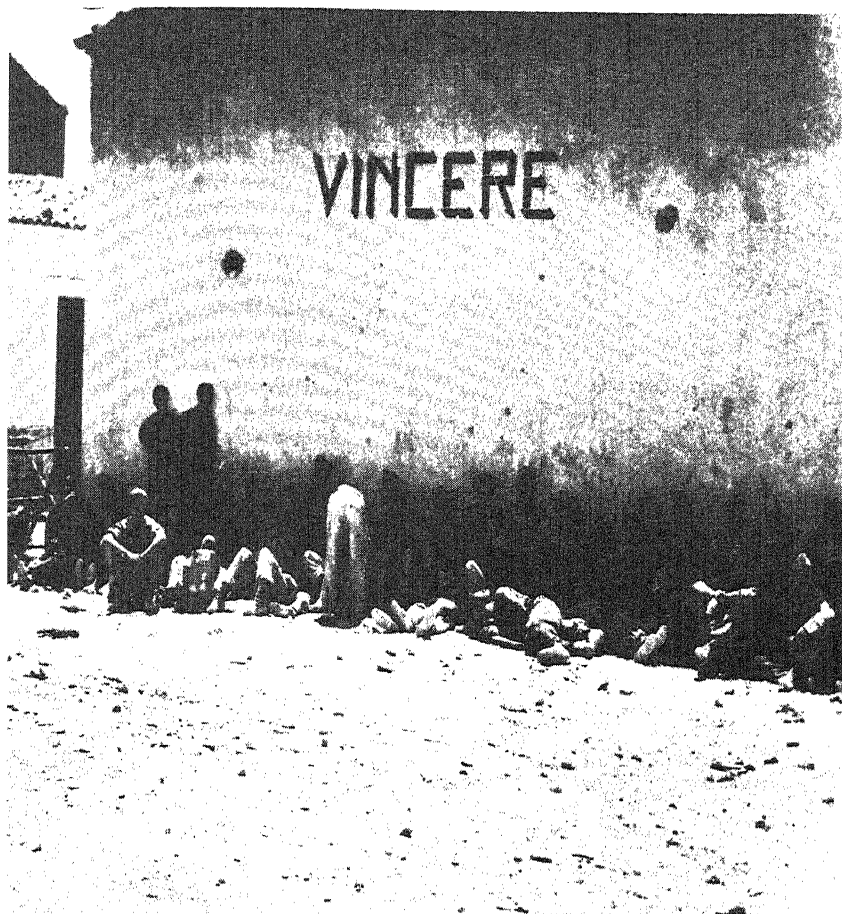
The last war produced Sergeant York. The last war produced Sergeant York even before Hollywood did. Sergeant York was a rightful hero among mass captors. But Sergeant York did not leave the earth. He was an infantryman, and not an airborne member of the infantry at that.

All this is by way of introducing Lieutenant (JG) Paul E. Coughlin, Naval aviator aboard one of our cruisers, where he is known as "Pete."

Now let's go back in time to "D" day and make it 1 o'clock in the afternoon. Had you been on the *Spelvin's* bridge, as Colonel Burkart was at that moment, and had you been looking toward Scoglitti at the time, you would have been as perplexed by what you saw as the Colonel was. Because there, circling over those bare, rolling ridges to the northwest of Scoglitti where a single two-story house and a long one-story barrack can be found, was one of those pontooned two-seater, cruiser-based biplanes which we have so often seen hovering over the Atlantic and which our airplane spotters learnedly, and rightly, describe as an SOC. The SOC had dropped two bombs and was indulging in some machine-gun play as it went round and round over one seemingly small and unstrategic area.

Had we watched the same scene from the other seat in Lieutenant Coughlin's SOC we would have known what the JG was up to, though even then we might have wondered if what our eyes were swearing to could possibly be true.

By 1 o'clock on "D" day's afternoon, Lieutenant Coughlin had been catapulted off his cruiser. When he reached those hills and the barrack and the two-story house northwest of Scoglitti, he saw a number of Italian soldiers manning pillboxes. Lieu-



"Vincere" and the Vanquished



Taking Over

LIFE AND LETTERS

tenant Coughlin had some 100-pound bombs with him. No doubt his fingers were as itchy as any gunner's. Of his skipper, Captain Paul Hendren on the cruiser, he asked permission to release some bombs, a request immediately granted.

Whereupon Lieutenant Coughlin dropped a bomb or two. To his astonishment a great many more Italian soldiers than he had first sighted, instead of running to cover, came running out from cover from all sides with both hands held high in what unmistakably was not an approved Fascist salute. Plainly they wanted to surrender. But how, since Lieutenant Coughlin was up in the air, and they could not leave the ground?

It was then that Lieutenant Coughlin began circling and using his machine gun. He was not trying to kill his prisoners. Far from it. He was seeking to herd them together, as a shepherd dog rounds up sheep, and then nudge them toward the nearest American outpost. This he did for quite a time, shooting thoughtfully just behind them, not near enough to hurt but close enough to keep them moving in the desired direction.

Fortunately Lieutenant Coughlin, from his superior position, soon spied an advance patrol from the 157th Regimental Combat Team of the 45th Division. He flew forward to them, signaling them the direction in which to follow him. Then he circled back to the Italians, still coaxing them along with the sweet cajolement of a well-controlled machine gun. Eventually the American patrol and the Italians met, and Lieutenant Coughlin turned over his prisoners to forces less apt to harass them and better equipped to handle them.

Oh, yes. The number of these ground-borne, air-captured prisoners? The number was something to make even Sergeant York scratch his medal-covered chest. The number of prisoners Lieutenant (JG) Coughlin captured from his plane was 150. Not a bad bag, no matter how you look at it, and as true supposedly as Navy Regs.

This reminds me that today Lieutenant Deakin was going through some of the letters and documents taken from Italian prisoners captured less melodramatically. And Lieutenant Dea-

Nel nome di Dio e
dell'Italia giuro di
eseguire gli ordini del
DUCE e di servire con
tutte le mie forze e se
è necessario col mio
sangue la causa della
Rivoluzione Fascista.



GIOVENTU' ITALIANA DEL LITTORIO



The Order of the She-Wolf

LIFE AND LETTERS

kin has passed on to me one document which throws a light at once humorous and pathetic on the Fascist Party.

He showed me a card of membership to a Fascist Party organization. The oath of allegiance taken by the owner of the card is impressive. It reads, "In the name of God and of Italy I swear to carry out the orders of the Duce and to serve with all my strength, and if necessary with my blood, the cause of the Fascist Revolution."

Quite an impressive oath, you must admit; full of vocal flourishes worthy of the Metropolitan Opera House. But who signed this oath, and at what ripe old age? And who thus became the 1,900,009th member of the Order of the She-Wolf? The card bore the name of Nigro Concetti. And who is Nigro Concetti, that stalwart upholder of the Fascist Revolution?

He was born on November 1, 1940, and in the name of God and Italy, he joined up as a Fascist Party member on November 9, 1940, as a muscular mental giant nine days old. Nine days old, like pease-porridge hot, pease-porridge cold, pease-porridge in the Fascist pot, nine days old. Nigro Concetti, his party card and diapered oath make quite an eloquent comment on the intellectual level of Il Duce's more ardent constituents. Which is just where what is most ridiculous becomes most tragic.

One other item brought to light from the mass of letters taken from the Italians in the Scoglitti area. The Fascist quoted is a little older than bambino Concetti. In this case the writer is a woman addressing, from Turin, a series of letters to an Italian sergeant stationed at Ragusa. Although only given in snatches, these letters paint an unmistakable picture. Imagine their handwriting as it started out, trim and small, swelling finally to nerve-shocked sprawls across the page, and you may have a clearer notion of the agony for which they speak.

(1942—*after the RAF raids on Turin*) "We are well, but in this accursed land being well no longer means what it used to."

(October 1, 1942) "Factories went on part time and schools were closed for over two months. You would beat your brow

LIFE AND LETTERS

if you could see the state our beautiful Turin is in now. I cannot say more at present, but in every house in our suburbs there's not one that's not full of refugees in every corner, even to the stables."

(December 27, 1942) "We are outside the bombed area, but we can feel the explosions."

(February 14, 1943) "There is genuine evidence that regular checks are being made on absenteeism."

(February 25, 1943) "I pray God that he may send the peace for which everyone prays."

The invasion of Sicily was feared at least as early as April 4. The entry for June 22 reads, "You say that you are afraid from one day to another of something which cannot be seen, only felt. . . . As things are going, there is nothing to do but to hope for the best, even though it is obvious that things get worse every day."

Now for the news from the outside world, of which there is precious little.

So far as the Sicilian invasion is concerned, one hears that Augusta was occupied by midnight last night; that Catania's airfield has been bombed; and that Syracuse is now being used as an Allied Naval base. As for the world at large, judging from what has come into the Communications Office during the day, you might think everything was as quiet as it was in a certain for once mouseless house on a certain Christmas eve.

One thing *is* news, news which touches all of us aboard the *Spelvin*. This is what, by the rules of censorship, we will be permitted to say in letters to be mailed in Africa tomorrow, and afterwards when we are homeward bound.

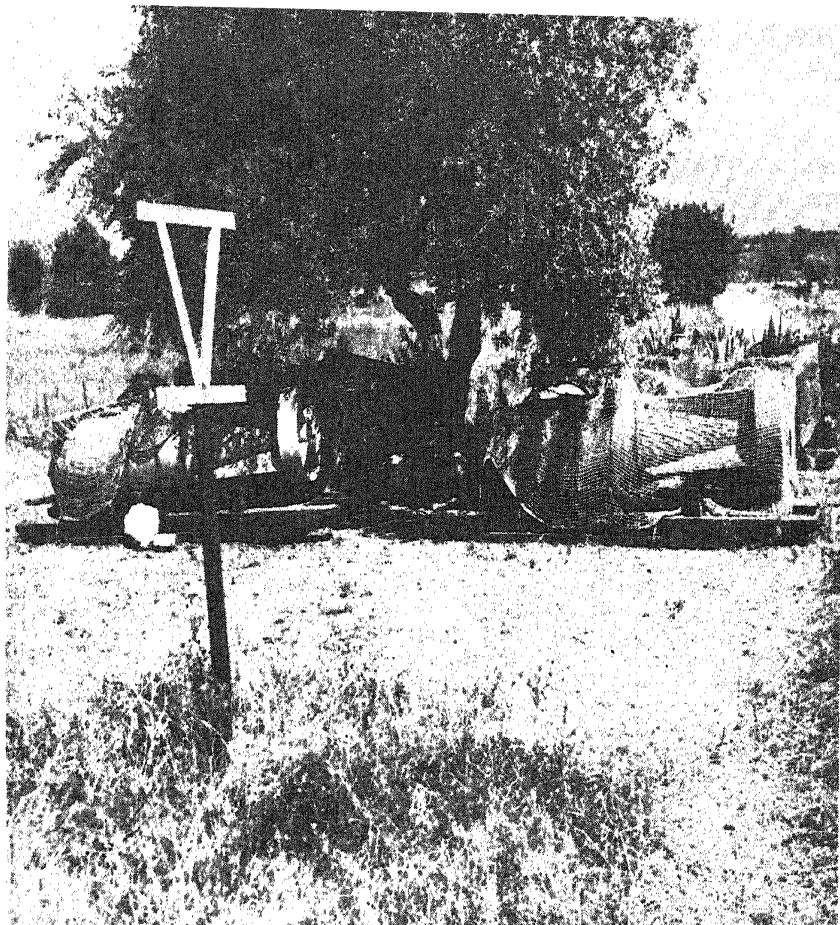
Now listen attentively.

(1) In your letters you cannot say you have been in or near Sicily; in the Mediterranean; in Africa; or in the Atlantic.

(2) You cannot say you were in action; in other words,



Wreckage of German Mark VI Tank



German Bomb Dump

LIFE AND LETTERS

you cannot write home to say you took Sicily single-handed, or even in good company.

(3) You cannot mention the weather, any naval or military operations, ship movements, or the movements of troops or air forces.

(4) You cannot say where you were, where you are going, what you have been doing, or what you expect to do.

(5) You cannot criticize the armed forces.

(6) You cannot send any foreign picture postcards, feelthy or clean, indicating by picture or caption where you have been. But you can send Navy form postcards, if you want to bother.

(7) You cannot be allowed to reveal any of these forbidden subjects by plain talk, by double talk, by triple talk, by innuendo, by implication, or by family code.

(8) You cannot, you must not, be interesting.

(9) You cannot say the *Spelvin* was NOT sunk, because this reveals a ship's movement, upward in this case.

BUT—oh, thin ray of hope in the thickening darkness—

(1) You can say who you are.

(2) You can say you have been born, if you don't say where or why.

(3) You can say you are well, and ask if your father and mother are well and still married.

(4) You can ask if your children have cut their teeth on each other's throats.

(5) You can mention John L. Lewis, Wendell Willkie, and Mrs. Roosevelt by name, because after all America is a free country.

(6) You can tell your wife, mother, and sweetheart (one or all three, as the case may be) that you love her or them.

(7) You can say you are growing fat or thin.

(8) You can ask if the old gray cat has had kittens, because after all we are fighting for the Four Freedoms.

LIFE AND LETTERS

(9) You can mention the fact that you would not mind seeing a girl.

(10) You can write your bank to find out how much you are overdrawn.

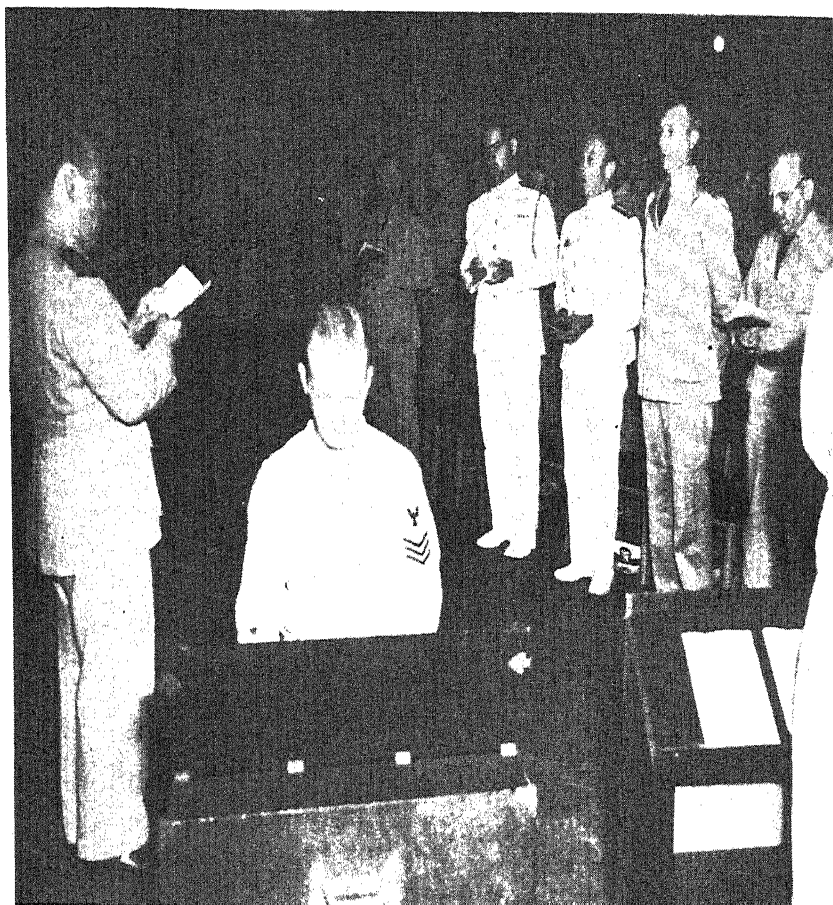
(11) You can say "Hail and Farewell" without fear of court-martial.

(12) And you can send kisses, if you know how to spell the word and don't have to use XXXXX's.

In fact, wasn't it foolish, wasting all this time learning to write?



Destroyed Machine Gun Nest



Victory Service

26. *Man-sized Problem* *Children*

Gentlemen, grab hold of your chests and prepare to expand them. As for your shoulders, throw them back. A dispatch from Admiral Hewitt, Commander-in-Chief U. S. Naval Forces North African Waters, has reached the *Spelvin*, addressed to all ships and units in the Western Task Force.

It reads, "Due to careful planning, excellent seamanship, gunfire and engineering, and a high standard of proficiency and devotion to duty by all hands, the most difficult and complicated task of landing our troops on hostile shores has been successfully accomplished. Informed reports on specially meritorious acts and accomplishments have been many. I consider that all, from the Task Force Commanders to the lowest ratings, have performed splendidly and are deserving the highest praise. Well done. It is now our duty to support, maintain, and build up the forces which have landed. Carry on."

There, gentlemen, is praise for victory. Yesterday and today we have been seeing other proofs of victory—prisoners, German and Italian, who have jammed the jetty.

They have jammed the jetty, these prisoners, *and* filled our minds with difficult questions. Among these questions must be counted such a teaser as, Which have been the more interesting—the prisoners or our own reactions to them? The prisoners, back from two fronts of the war, have been crowded on the jetty where less than two weeks ago our own troops were waiting long and patiently, in equal discomfort, before setting out

MAN-SIZED PROBLEM CHILDREN

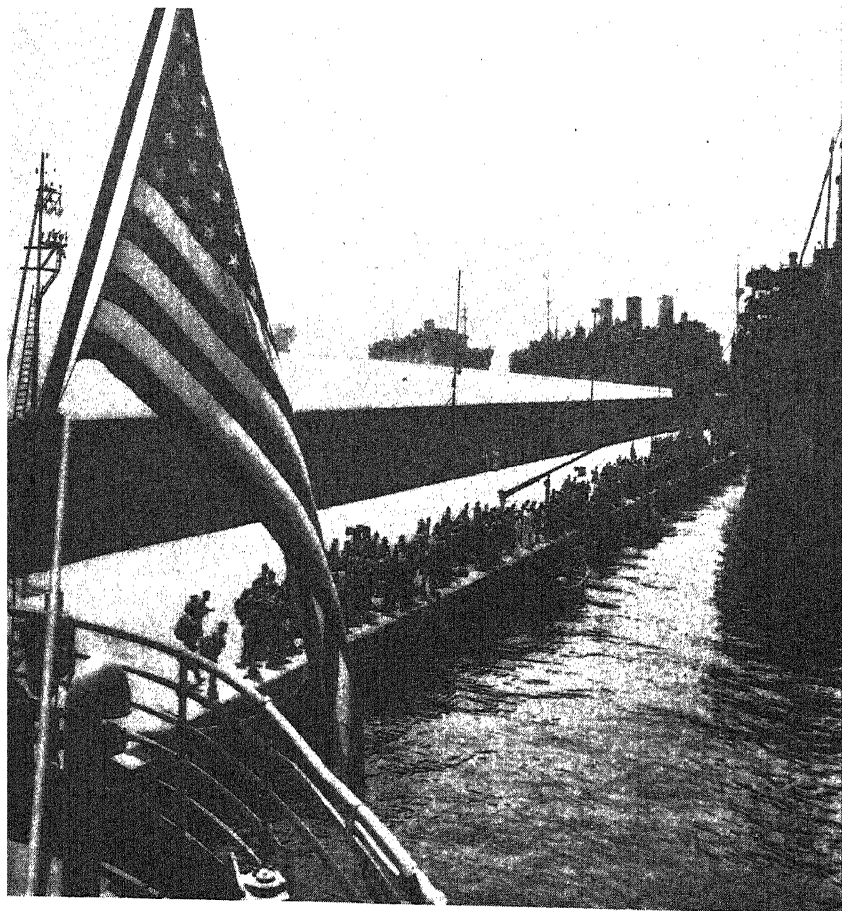
to war. But what a difference between going out to win and coming back conquered!

These men, herded together or filing past on the jetty, have been Italians: dark, small, often wretchedly equipped though cheerful remnants of Mussolini's imperial armies. Sometimes they have looked less like picked roosters than like picked capons. Or these prisoners have been Germans, blond, bronzed, muscular, in fine physical condition; Germans who once were soldiers and, as such, proud members of Hitler's Afrika Korps.

Today's Italian crop was a reminder of our own Sicilian visit. Yesterday's harvest was a reminder, not of the Sicilian show, but of the African invasion; in particular, the Tunisian campaign. As yesterday's prisoners straggled along in the blazing sun, leaving the bull pen, they raised both dust and ghosts. They were covered by American tommy-guns and rifles. They were barked at by tough American top sergeants. Or they were ordered about briskly by a lean, bemonocled English colonel. While they have squatted in the scant shade of the jetty's cement wall, waiting to board big British liners or our own transports, these prisoners have been a sweaty, smelly, docile lot.

Did I say they have raised ghosts? What ghosts? Ghosts of those dark, perilous days when Tobruk fell; when the British had been pushed back; when the Germans were practically at the gates of Alexandria; when Rommel was a name feared 'round the world; when the Hitlerian nightmare threatened to become a Mediterranean reality.

These prisoners have raised other ghosts, too. Memories of the relief and wonder felt by us because of the British victory at El Alamein; memories of General Montgomery and General Alexander, and of the Eighth Army, which is even now winning fresh distinction for itself in Sicily; memories of the joy and hope ignited by our own invasion of Africa; of the stiff months of fighting which followed, that made our own Sicilian invasion possible, and hence brought both us and these prisoners here.



German Prisoners Being Loaded in North Africa

MAN-SIZED PROBLEM CHILDREN

Anyone who has looked at these prisoners or listened to the comments the mere sight of them has provoked aboard the *Spelvin* must know the questions they have raised, even if the right answers remain elusive. There was the tough school of thought; the fellows to be envied, in a way, because for them it was all so simple. They said, "We ought to line the bastards up and mow 'em down with a machine gun."

Then there were the middle-of-the-roaders. They said, "Yes, perhaps. But we couldn't do that. They've surrendered, and International Law says. . . . Sure, they present an awful problem. But, after all, they were only doing their duty as they saw it. And don't forget, our men are taken prisoner too."

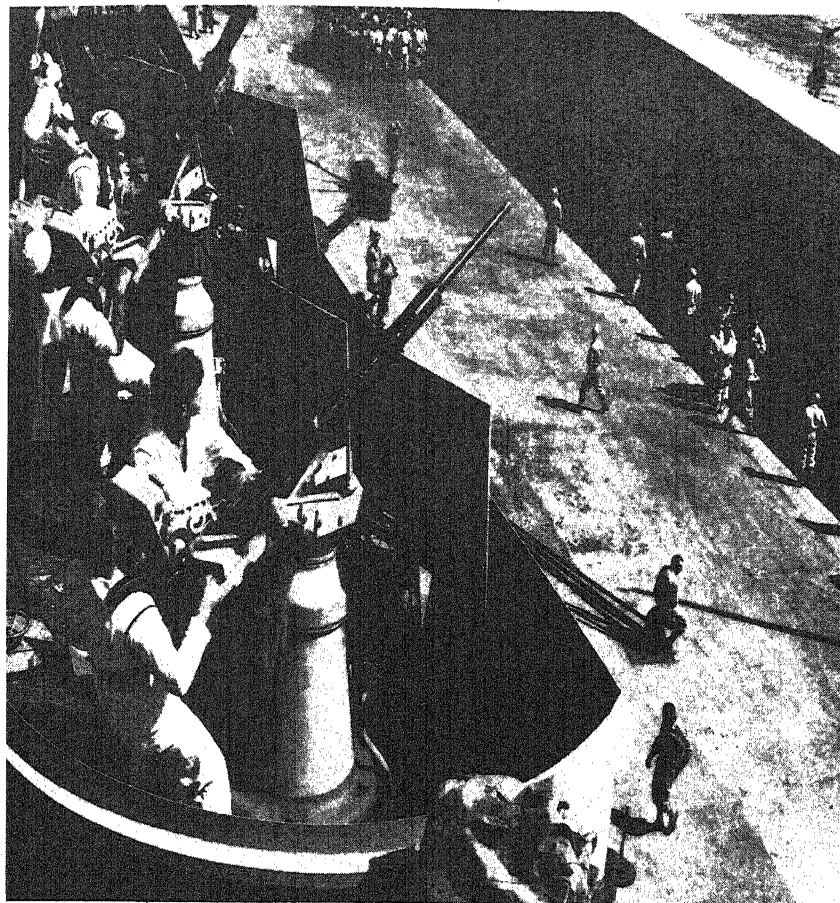
Finally, there were the out-and-out humanitarians. They said, "These guys are wrong, as we see it. Still, they are human beings, and we're Americans, not Nazis, and the Bible says. . . ." Accordingly, even without bartering with them for souvenirs, these men tossed the prisoners cigarettes and candy. And smiled on them. And in general treated them as they would like to be done unto had the situation been reversed.

Meanwhile the prisoners have been marched off to their ships or rounded up in the bull pen before being transferred elsewhere. Meanwhile an order has been issued which directs very clearly that "fraternization between Army and Navy personnel with prisoners of war will cease immediately. This includes talking with prisoners, except in the line of duty, negotiating for souvenirs, giving of cigarettes, etc., etc."

In other words, that IS that.

Still one cannot help wondering about the disturbing differences between an enemy unseen, impersonal, still fighting, death-dealing, and merciless, and an enemy close at hand, captured, defenseless, seen away from the heat of actual battle, and seen as a humiliated individual rather than a vigilant foe.

Before becoming too sentimental about these prisoners, particularly these Nazi prisoners, let's go back to the record of the party to which these men subscribed, of which they were a part, and in which most of them undoubtedly still believe.



Watching for Planes Above the Jetty



Super Race

MAN-SIZED PROBLEM CHILDREN

Run through the whole black list of that party's sins. Think of its public crimes—the Dollfuss assassination, of what happened in the Sudetenland, in Austria, in Czechoslovakia and Poland. Think of Amsterdam, of France, of Belgium, of Norway; of what England and Russia have withstood, and of what would have been our own fate, had they not done as they did.

Remember, when exchanging a smile or a cigarette with one of these prisoners, what precisely such pathetic individuals as we saw have done to others far more pathetic, when these prisoners were not prisoners and the world was opening up for them like their bad oyster.

Remember their barbarities when they have been lost in the anonymity of uniformed squads. Remember the horror for which they, or their brothers and their cousins or their friends, have been responsible in their concentration camps. Remember the old people they have dispossessed and put to hard labor, knowing that hard labor would cost these old people their lives. Remember the entire villages they have moved away without mercy, herding their inhabitants into cold trains, expatriating them, sending them to certain death in faraway places.

Remember how, in the darkness of what might have been friendly nights, the heavy boots of these men, or men of their kind, have clattered up to the doors of the innocent to evict them. Think of the priests they have tormented; of the indignities and cruelties beyond reckoning they have heaped upon the Jews. Remember how they have perverted the once glorious heritage of German scholarship into a library of deliberate lies, where no pretense of liberty exists.

Remember how they have murdered and pillaged in the name of a superior race. Remember their dreams of conquest and the treatment they have meted out to those people whose countries they have overrun. Remember that Bible of the new disorder, "Mein Kampf." Remember the shame of those great mass demonstrations, at which just such vigorous young Germans as we have seen have gladly surrendered their freedom to the whims of a leader. Remember that, even when we were

MAN-SIZED PROBLEM CHILDREN

in Sicily, one of our paratroopers has reported that, from a bush in which he had landed, he saw Germans—not unlike these Germans—riddle the body of another American paratrooper with bullets as he came down in a tree; indeed, not only riddle his friend's body with bullets but cover it with gasoline and burn it gleefully after he was dead. Remember all these things, and one's pity for these prisoners becomes properly tempered.

The point is not that these Germans, from a cattle-breeder's standpoint, are great, strapping huskies who can on occasion smile and murmur expressions of gratitude and touch our too-easily-touched hearts. It is not the bodies of these men, however formidable, which are our enemies. It is their minds. These have been corrupted by beliefs which, in Hitler's proud boast, have "brutalized" their holders. These beliefs are contrary to everything in which we ourselves believe and for which we hope. They not only contradict, they deny and imperil, what are the foundations of our faith.*

If we are here instead of being at home; if we are in a world at war instead of going about our peaceful business; if our wounded were being unloaded here yesterday, these men, individually so touching, are the reason for our being here; these men, because of their conditioning, their convictions, and their misdeeds. Even the chocolate-givers and the cigarette-tossers among us seemed to sense this when ambulances lined the

* On the way home Admiral Kirk sent a message to one of our transports which was loaded with German prisoners, to find out the condition of these prisoners. The reply said that in good weather they were allowed up fore and aft; that they were clean and their discipline was good. It also reported that the German colonels aboard were so pleased with the treatment they and their men had received that they had assured the Commanding Officer they would see to it that our officers and men in German prison camps were treated just as well *when Hitler won the war!* They admitted their fear of U-boat attacks had made them nervous at first. They had been told we had no destroyers and could not believe their eyes when they saw our encircling screen of "cans." When later the news of Mussolini's fall reached them, they refused to believe it, dismissing it as Allied propaganda.



Vaiksnota

Beyond Regeneration

MAN-SIZED PROBLEM CHILDREN

jetty, nosing their way among these prisoners and discharging stretcher-load after stretcher-load of our wounded. The candy and tobacco giving came to a halt then, a halt as spontaneous as it was abrupt. A hush settled over both the jetty and the ships alongside.

If we are soft, these prisoners are not. Make no mistake about this. Our decencies are their strongest weapons. It is a compliment to our hearts that they can be blitzed so easily, but it is no compliment to our heads.

Now for some details about these prisoners. I found one German who spoke a little English. He told me he and his companions had been in Africa for about two years. He said the unit alongside of us was of the famous Afrika Korps. He was happy to have the war over for himself, and not unhappy at the thought of going to America. He also said, as the appearance of his companions proved, that the "C" rations they had been eating had agreed with them. He was a mousey man who beamed when spoken to, and whose eyes seemed to fill with tears as he spoke. He made his tug at the sympathies, all right. But fine as were the bodies of the men around him, their faces were not the faces of the ideal Master Race. Although they had little hatred in them, they had less enlightenment. Their real tragedy—and ours—is that they appeared to be unregenerate and in years beyond regeneration.

If you wonder why, before boarding their ships, these prisoners were deprived of their razor blades, their tobacco tins, and all tinned goods, the reason has to do with their being unregenerate. They place a low value on all life, including their own lives. On a previous return trip to the States, prisoners just like these men who so touched our sympathies are said to have used their razor blades, or any sharp thing they could lay their hands to, in order to slash the life belts to ribbons. Their hope was to make death certain for everyone aboard, should any of the Fuehrer's submarines, by some blessed chance, sink the vessel.

The Germans are reported to treat our prisoners according

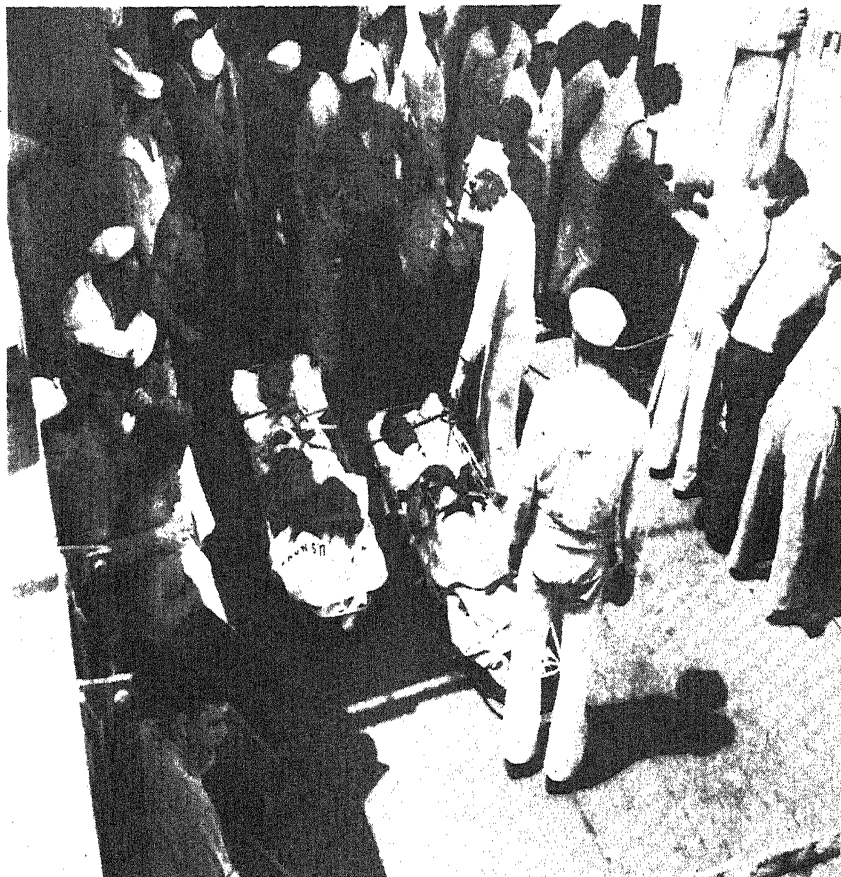
MAN-SIZED PROBLEM CHILDREN

to the requirements of the Geneva Convention; in fact, to treat them as well as we treat theirs. Remembering our own prisoners in German or Italian hands, let's trust that these German and Italian prisoners are treated according to the requirements of International Law. No better, no worse. But just because they are prisoners, do not forget they are enemies, scoffers at what we hold dear, haters of the values we cherish. Most of these Germans still believe in and would fight again for what we have no other choice than to loathe.

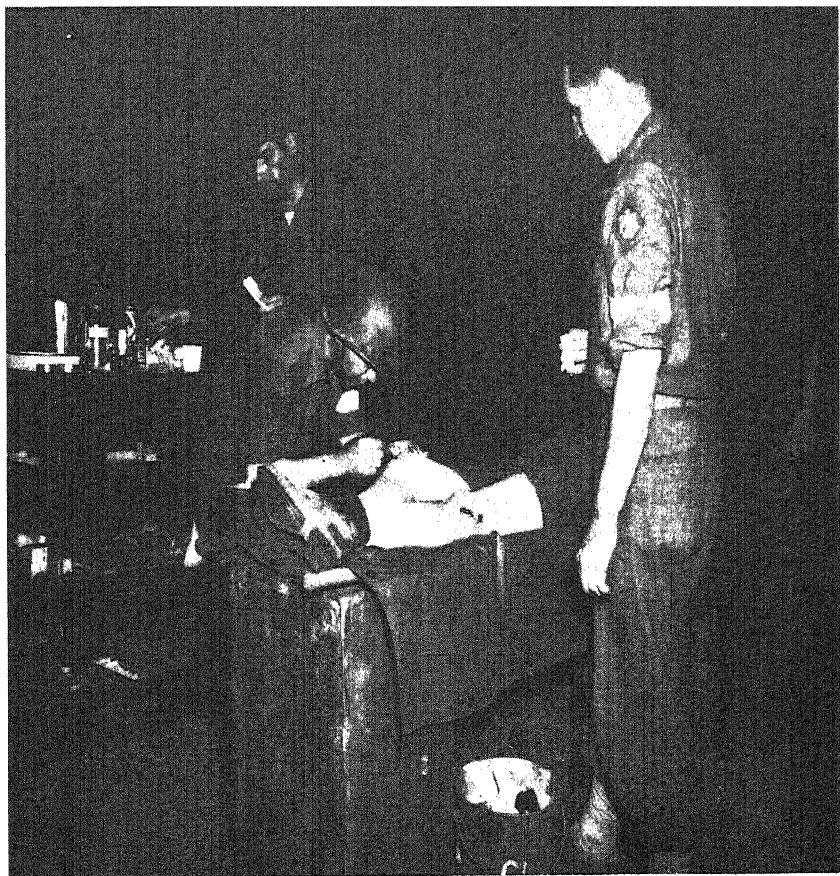
They are the world's problem children, these men, only they are man-sized.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Algiers*) The British Navy and the RAF are making the Axis task of sending reinforcements and supplies to Sicily from the Italian mainland one of the utmost difficulty. (*Allied Headquarters, North Africa*) British Eighth Army columns, in a phenomenal drive to the north of Augusta, are now pouring through the Sicilian foothills on the verge of the plain of Catania. (*Moscow*) Soviet counterattacks in the Belgorod area have been intensified. (*London*) Strong formations of United States Flying Fortresses attacked three German aircraft centers yesterday in northern France. (*Oran*) Under a London dateline *The Stars and Stripes* printed in Oran yesterday a dispatch describing how an anti-Axis group has been formed in Italy and become vocal in print while unrest grows.



Our Wounded Being Taken Aboard



Field Dressing—Scoglitti

27. *Moving Day*

This is a moment of farewell. At such moments of leave-taking, a good many oafs are fond of quoting Shakespeare, because, though a genius, Shakespeare could be as oafish as anyone else. It was Shakespeare who was responsible for that valentine nifty about "parting is such sweet sorrow that I shall say good night till it be morrow." Although the line may be the delight of commuters, I can find nothing sweet about the good-bys which will part us tomorrow.

We of the Flag have grown very fond of the *Spelvin* and deeply appreciate the many kindnesses which Captain Mather, his officers, and his men have shown us. We trust you have grown at least accustomed to us. Flags, like olives, are cultivated tastes.

There is an old saying which insists that fish and guests stink after three days. We have been with you a little more than two months. The water supply has not often been plentiful, and our contributions to your laundry have sometimes been curtailed. Even so, we hope you can tell us from fish.

One of the *Spelvin's* officers said last night about the Flag, "We hated to see you come aboard, and now we hate to see you leave." We would like to believe you feel like this. I ask you not—I repeat, *not*—to disillusion us.

The truth is that, though we have enjoyed your hospitality, we have been collaborators in an adventure. As Admiral Kirk phrases it in his message to all hands, "For two months my flag has flown on your ship. During this time I and my staff have lived with you and worked with you. Together we have sailed

MOVING DAY

many thousands of miles; together we have had a considerable share in the largest amphibious operation in history, and one of the most successful. Tomorrow we part. I know that the burden of an Admiral's Flag and an Admiral's staff often bears hard upon the company of the ship that carries them. It is heavy duty. You have borne it well, and for myself and men, I thank you. The *Spelvin* is a fine ship, with a fine crew and a fine skipper. As we go to our separate duties I think we may justly take pride, together, in a task well done. Good luck to you all."

As the Admiral says, we go to our separate duties. You, for the time being, stay in the Mediterranean, while we face the hazards of the Atlantic. Why? To get back to That Town.

Miss Dorothy Parker, according to an ancient fable, once had a canary which she called Onan. If the reason for her naming her canary Onan should elude you, may I remind you that according to the Bible Onan scattered his seed upon the ground. We of the Flag and you of the *Spelvin* are being scattered tomorrow. But though we may be parting company, we cannot part with our joint memories.

After all, we have eaten "K" rations together, and they are enough to cement any friendship. We have dodged submarine packs in each other's company. We have staggered out of our sacks to General Quarters in the darkness of the same early mornings. We have roamed home waters together. Taken inoculations together. Zigzagged in unison across the Atlantic. Drunk the same bad wines in Africa. Spoken the same bad French. Gone without the same showers. Seen the same shore lines. Watched the same enemy planes. Survived the same movies. Outlived the same "D" day and the same coffee. Waited for the same "H" hour. Heard the same flak. Watched the same Spitfires prove irresistible to the same gun crews. Been lit by the same German flares. Scanned the same tracer bullets. Sought the same war trophies. Looked at the same poor specimens of the super race. And gone without the same soft drinks, hard drinks, etc., etc.

MOVING DAY

No matter where we go in the future, a part of us will always be spliced to the *Spelvin*. Because, oh, symbol of symbols, don't forget that in each other's company we have seen Scoglitti by night and by day.

In parting may I make a humble suggestion? The Indians had their war whoop; the Confederates their Rebel yell; the Bronx has its cheer; Mr. Churchill has his V-for-Victory; the fraternity boys have their grips; and the Fascists have their salutes (although they are beginning to execute it with two hands). Therefore, may I suggest to you sons of boats and beaches, who, in this Amphibious Task Force, took part in the invasion of Sicily, when next we meet, as meet we will, that we have our own form of salutation? Let our eyes flash in the most Italian manner. Let there be Mount Etna in our retina. Let our faces beam. Let the middle finger of our right hands shoot skywards until our hands are level with our eyes. And let us cry—guess what? Why, of course: *Scoglitti! Scoglitti! Scoglitti!*

Just for old time's sake I wish I could bring you some tidbits from the world news, as usual, uncursed by Kreml's hair tonic, unblest by Barbasol, undropped by Maxwell House Coffee, and unjerked by Jergen's lotion. But tonight the news is that the *Spelvin* has received no outside news. So I can only say, with the appropriate gesture, not hail or even farewell, not *au revoir* or *a rivederci*, not *auf Wiedersehen*, but SCOGLITTI, and a speedy peace decisively won.

28. *Homeward Bound*

When we were in the Straits this morning, those of you whose native habitat is the *Bond* must have been startled to hear over this, your own loud-speaker, a strange voice at work resummoning Hannibal's poor, dead-tired elephants, regurgitating Gibraltar's well-known history, and in general sounding like a cross between Lord Haw-Haw and Uncle Tom. For that abrupt intrusion, for that vocal assault made without fair warning, I apologize. Let me explain.

You of the *Bond* may have guessed that you are no longer alone. You may have suspected that the Flag has moved aboard; in short, that the *Spelvin* has shared her treasures with you. The men from the *Spelvin* are veterans of more than the triumphant invasion of Sicily in which the *Bond* took part. They are also valiant survivors of almost daily talks such as this particular one to which you of the *Bond* are now being exposed.

It was Admiral Kirk, whose flag the *Bond* now flies, who first thought of these daily talks. It was he who included among the *Spelvin's* Battle Stations a Bridge Announcer; a man whose pleasant job was to *see* for those who might be stationed so that they could not see for themselves, and to serve the ship as its roving reporter, its scuttle-butler, and one of those cow-boys of the air who round up the day's news.

Now for the first secret, which is about as much a secret as the fact that Mae West is not a male. We are heading home. And all of us—you old-timers of the *Bond* and we Joads from the *Spelvin*—are going through a difficult period of readjustment. You of the *Bond* cannot help eying us of the Flag with

HOMeward BOUND

suspicion. We have come to you, some two hundred and fifty strong, as uninvited house guests, and must be just about as welcome. We have invaded your ship, overcrowded it for you, and exercised, so far as its decks and cabins are concerned, what you must regard as a form of Squatter Sovereignty. If you have no breathing space, blame us. If you are denied your *Lebensraum*, blame us. If you have lost your bunks and been forced to move, blame us.

As for us who have come to you from the *Spelvin*, we are still lost; still stumblers on your new terrain; still struggling to find our way about, to avoid those greased cables you have set about as traps; still searching for our misplaced offices, our misplaced sacks, our misplaced comforts. We cannot say we are lonely. Inspect our quarters and you will find no hermit thrushes. We have turned into sardines. Most of us have never slept with so many people in our lives. You have changed us into mateless Mormons, whose every snore is a mass movement. Some of us, in those happy opium dens we now call home, reach for pipes that no one remembers to pass. However anti-social we may have been, we are now a sociable lot, gregarious to the point of suffocation.

The real adjustment all of us face is more serious than getting used to one another, regardless of which ship carried us to Sicily. The real adjustment we face is getting over having Sicily over for us. We have lived this Amphibious Operation these many weeks or months. We have thought it, slept it, and outlasted it. Now that it is past, we all feel empty as a cow elephant might feel had she calved a circusful of mammoths.

On the way over, every whale was an enemy submarine; every distant seagull was a possible Messerschmitt. "Well, if not tonight," we would say, tightening our life belts and secretly hoping for the worst, "I'll bet you that something happens tomorrow night." And heads would gravely nod while apprehensions rose. The stern business which lay ahead filled every moment with the threat of tension, if not with actual excitement. Now the business is successfully done, and in this



No Hermits Here

HOMeward BOUND

breathing spell we all feel a little lost, a little rudderless, a little as if school were out and yet no vacation had begun.

As travelers we are not as virginal as we were. The first impact of the Old World, which the sight of the African coast line and then the vision of Gibraltar brought—this has gone, if not for good, then certainly until next time. Like the fellow who said he had read "Hamlet," we have seen a battle. This does not mean that other battles, like "Hamlet," will in the future lack things to say or do to us. But most of us can never see our first battle again. Or go on our first expedition.

Though some of the wonder may have gone out of our traveling, the duty has not. What we are apt to forget is that precisely the same dangers lie waiting for us in the Atlantic which we braved before, making identical demands upon our vigilance. If as Flag and Ship we are going home with some of the bloom worn off, it is in order to get ready for further operations designed to set this sick world right.

Before those next operations lead us again overseas, it is agreeable to know that, on the subject of the American share in the Sicilian invasion, no less a person than Mr. Winston Churchill had this to say in a message to General Eisenhower: "Further congratulations on the unfolding success of the Sicilian campaign. . . . The weather gave occasion, according to reports made by the British Admiralty, for a magnificent display of American seamanship."

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Allied Headquarters, North Africa*) Crotone, a port on the Italian mainland, was heavily shelled yesterday by an undisclosed number of British cruisers. (*London*) BBC announced this afternoon that Palermo had fallen; that the Commander of Italian Naval Forces in Sicily had been captured by the Allies five days ago; that stiff fighting is still in progress for Catania; and that the Russians continue to advance relentlessly in the Orel sector. (*Southwest Pacific*) United States ground forces are attacking less than a mile and quarter from the Japanese air base at Munda.

29. *Balcony to Let*

By now you must know.

Good news travels almost as fast as bad. And this good news is news which this Task Force has had its proud share in creating.

Last night by 10 o'clock and all through today our radios have been barking the good news about Mussolini. Did I say good news about Mussolini? What kind of news possible of being described as "good" could Mussolini just now contribute to a world whose illnesses he has multiplied, aggravated, and embodied?

One item; only one item.

Il Duce is out. He has fallen as leader of his Fascist state. The bantam King of Italy has accepted his resignation as Premier, and Marshal Badoglio has replaced Il Duce, saying in his official proclamation issued in Rome last night, "The war goes on. I take over the government."

Forget the Marshal for a moment, or what the immediate future may hold for Italy and hence for us, and consider only what Il Duce's removal means.

Little Caesar though Mussolini has been, like the great Caesar he has fallen, and "O, what a fall there was, my countrymen." The news of his tumble has stunned us all. It is too good to be true; too sudden to be possible; too much desired to have taken place. It has left us incredulous, even in the moment of our joy and relief.

When in Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra," Octavius

BALCONY TO LET

hears of Mark Antony's death, he turns unbelieving on the messenger to ask,

"What is't thou say'st?"

"I say, O Caesar, Antony is dead."

Whereupon Octavius exclaims what many of us huddled around the radios felt in part last night:

"The breaking of so great a thing should make
A greater crack. The round world
Should have shook lions into civil streets
And citizens to their dens. The death of Antony
Is not a single doom; in the name lay
A moiety of the world."

In a much simpler language, I heard a response not unlike Octavius's when last night to a sailor I played the part of messenger.

"Have you heard the good news?" I asked, eager to spread it.

"What good news?" asked the sailor.

"Mussolini has resigned."

"Oh," said the sailor, like Octavius unbelieving. "Oh, lieutenant, cut the crap! No kidding?"

Mussolini was no Antony. No one could accuse this statesman out of Verdi of being "the noblest Roman of them all." Neither was he an Octavius. He was one of the major shankers left by the disease which was the last war and the last peace treaty. He was a noisy play-actor strutting about in a poor Fascist script that was bound to lead to tragedy. Born of a Red scare, he was to create a Black-shirt terror.

Some of us first saw him on a balcony in Italy twenty-one years ago, soon after his unopposed march on Rome, when he had just come into power. This was after his days of being a proscribed radical editor, a socialist agitator, working furiously underground against the conservative Italian Government before the last war. This was after he had seen the Fascist light; dreamed the Fascist dream; and when he was already begin-

BALCONY TO LET

ning to rattle the bones of the long-dead Caesars in the hope of bringing Imperial Rome to life in his person.

As the years have slipped by—those foolish, desperate years during which again and again this wretched war could have been averted if only men had cared enough and had possessed the will for action—we have seen Mussolini grow into the very same old, fat, foolish, gesticulating bald-pate, exhausted by power and its abuse, who yesterday turned in his resignation, after ruining his country and helping to cripple the world.

We can all see Il Duce's Jack-Oakie-ish image before our eyes. And seeing it, we recall how desperately, how ludicrously Mussolini struggled to make himself and his legend one. We can see him pretending for the camera man that those ample jowls of his were filled with cement. We can see the pout—the would-be Caesar scowl—into which, for public consumption, he was fond of puckering up his brow.

We can see him jerking his head up and down on the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia; making huge, far-flung operatic gestures, and then letting his hands flutter back to his leather belt to rest on his hips. From close-ups we remember the coarse texture of the skin below his cavernous mouth and on that mammoth chin, which he rehearsed so carefully to resemble a flying buttress. We can hear the scream of his voice, less mad than Hitler's, less hysterical, but dangerous in its frenzy and sickeningly far from reason. And we can recall the egotist's grin which would freeze on his face after one of his more threatening utterances, while his people cheered and his head wobbled with pleasure on his bull neck.

Well, Mussolini has fallen. Il Braggaducio has gone. Where he has gone—whether he has scurried to his country villa, is hidden in Rome, or has left Italy—no one yet knows. At least no one has as yet reported. But we do know—it does seem to be finally confirmed—that he is out. This means that one of the three clay pigeons in the International Shooting Gallery at which the Allies are aiming is now down. Hitler and Hirohito remain as targets still to be removed.

BALCONY TO LET

What will happen in Italy? What will finally be done to or with Mussolini? Again no one appears to know. But it does seem unavoidable to conclude that the Duce's tumble will shorten the way and greatly hasten Italy's collapse. One of the blessed dangers of a dictatorship is that if you build a state around one man and then pry this leader loose, you expose that dictatorship to precisely the same dangers to which an arch is liable when its keystone is removed.

The radio reports that not only has Mussolini gone but that black shirts can no longer be worn in what was once Fascist Italy. In bringing all this about; in shortening the war; in changing the course of history; in cutting the tightrope from under Mussolini, all of us who took part in this amphibious invasion of Sicily can feel a happy sense of ownership, no matter how small or how remote. If we did not get into the Italian mainland, by storming Sicily we did at least jolt the boot of Italy into ousting Mussolini. Those beaches, conquered on that dark morning; the courage of the men in our small craft; those boats jammed with troops and equipment; the incredible accuracy of our naval gunfire; the speed of our unloading; and the valor of the army we carried—all these, as the days have proved, led straight to Rome rather than merely to Scoglitti.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Rome Radio, picked up by BBC*) Rome Radio today warned every Italian to be at his post. It announced that the King has declared martial law throughout the land. Military forces have taken over the control of the militia, the police, and all public works. Curfew has been ordered from dusk to dawn. No civilian will show himself outside his home. There will be no gathering of more than three people at a time. The sale of arms and ammunition has been forbidden. (*World Comment on Mussolini's Fall*) No authoritative comment has yet been made by the heads of the Allied governments. Mayor La Guardia broadcast to Italy in Italian from New York urging Italians to overthrow the Fascist government. Great crowds gathered in such places as Times Square to hear the latest bulletins. The Greeks, Poles,

BALCONY TO LET

Jugoslavs, and Egyptians are said to have been equally delighted with the news. Mr. Churchill is scheduled to speak on the Italian situation at the next meeting of the House of Commons. People are warned not to take Mussolini's fall as a sign of Italy's immediate withdrawal from the war. The fight will continue, says the British press, until the last German in Italy is killed, captured, or driven out, and Italy is given a chance for unconditional surrender. Both the King and the Marshal must go the whole way. (*Sicily*) The American Seventh Army, driving east along the Palermo road, has captured the port of Taormina, taking 7000 additional prisoners. The British Eighth Army is still facing stubborn resistance in its fight for Catania. (*London*) Essen, the home of the famous Krupp ammunition works, was heavily bombed last night. (*Moscow*) The Russian drive on German-held Orel continues with strong gains. The Germans' corridor of escape is being narrowed daily. (*South Pacific*) The heaviest raid of the war in the Pacific was made yesterday on Japanese-held Munda.



The Threads Join Together

30. *With a Great Big "D"*

So far we have gone as placidly about our business, which is getting home, as if we were schoolgirls returning from a shopping tour in a town uncursed by rapists. We have proceeded in weather cool enough in the hours of dawn and dusk to stabilize the thoughts of the younger hot-bloods and make some of us who are older wrap ourselves up in raincoats or windbreakers, as if we were draping a shawl around the shoulders of Whistler's Mother. We have had little to do except the reports, which are largely done. The sense of anticlimax is heavily upon us. We are as let down as Lady Godiva's hair. Having ridden in the engine cab, we now loll in the caboose.

Between chores we eat, we read; we read, we eat. We retake the beaches conversationally. We dream of "leaves" and talk of home, while playing a crafty form of "Going to Jerusalem" for the possession of the few upright chairs that are daily toted out to the sun deck from the lounge, which is now three overlapping offices. We have time just now in which to do everything but sleep. In particular, we have time to consider the strange anatomy of war, because so far the only thing moving around us is the *Bond*, which tosses restlessly at intervals, like a young boy in bed reading his first book on sex.

Let's start with what we thought war would be like before coming to what we have found it to be. There is a vast difference between the drums and trumpets of a military band heard at intermittent parades, and the work—the long, endless, unchanging work—the inexhaustible routine which is also war, and out of which the battles come.

WITH A GREAT BIG "D"

The Regulars knew better. They had known the Army and the Navy in days of peace, where we, who are reservists or newcomers to the ranks, thought at the moment of our joining up that we would find the services always at war, as we understood war to be. No matter how terrible we thought we knew war was, we believed that it and the posters would be a little more closely related than they are. We saw ourselves dieting on gunfire; doing a hundred and one "Spirit of '76" things; hoping to fire daily the gun which would save that day; and, in general, seeing action, nothing but action.

We were not fooled and did not fool ourselves. We were not romantics filled with cape-and-sword twaddle. The last war was too near for that. So was the large, persuasive literature of disillusionment which was its inky wake. We knew the horrors of war, all right. We knew its ugliness and its pain. We dreaded the discipline it forced upon us. Above all, we dreaded the surrender of personal identity which it represented; and the loss it meant of our families and what we had thought of as our lives and interests. Yet we were prepared to make all sacrifices. There was nothing else for us to do. The leaving of our families was part of our loving them.

We realized, of course, that helmets are nowadays thought to be better for being without plumes, and that in modern warfare there is no such thing as stainless steel. We recognized that, in this day of the machine, the trained mechanic by any other name would be the most needed and most valiant warrior. We knew that even gallantry—alas—had been streamlined. We were dimly aware that there was a science to this thing called war, but completely ignorant of the complexities of that science. No matter how thoroughly we agree, or agreed, with General Sherman's understatement, all of us, I think, felt that the duty which was plainly ours to do, and get done, would offer certain releasing differences. The men who hated their former jobs and were unhappily married were glad to find an honorable way out of both home and office. The extroverts felt they had found their biggest excuse to avoid thought in action.

WITH A GREAT BIG "D"

Even those who loved their wives and lives suspected that, much as they loathed war and all that goes with it, they might renew their living by undergoing new experiences.

I say this because on this unbelievably calm day we find ourselves fresh from an action which, in excitement and accomplishment, lived up to our fondest expectations. We are now wiser than we were. We know a period of quiet lies ahead of us, in which the seeming lack of action for which we were formerly unprepared will in itself be a vital form of action. We now know that only out of such tedium can the next expedition come, planned in terms of those details, minute and microscopic, with which this Sicilian invasion was planned.

Did I say we are wiser than we were? What I mean is that we now see the relationship between the desk and the deed, the office and the offensive, waiting and doing. For most of us, war now appears to be divided into two phases. One of these comes in the brief moments of action when we cannot help wondering if we will live. The other comes in those months between engagements when we are tempted even more frequently to wonder why we are alive. The choice is mainly an alliterative one, having to do with those "D's" which cannot be avoided—Dullness or Danger. The greater of these is Dullness.

Having seen this Sicilian adventure through, I think we have learned, even if to our sorrow, how these two phases of war are related. We have come to realize that in modern warfare the horrors of inaction are as linked to the exhilarations of action (if I may quote one of Longfellow's few Elinor Glyn images):

"As the bow is to the arrow
So the man is to the woman,
Useless each without the other."

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(London) The British Broadcasting Company announced this afternoon that Marsala has been captured by the Americans;

WITH A GREAT BIG "D"

that the British Fleet is continuing its bombardment of Catania; that the Americans are pushing westward on the road from Palermo, driving the enemy into the northwestern tip of the island, where the decisive battle for Sicily is now under way in circumstances recalling the Cape Bon push; and that 60,000 German and Italian prisoners have so far been taken in Sicily. (*Algiers*) General Giraud has returned to Algiers via London from his conferences in Washington with President Roosevelt and his military advisers. (*Moscow*) The Germans continue to be unable to halt the advance of the Russian army in the Orel sector.

31. *The "Have Nots"*

During these past days and nights our lives have been so crowded, so adventure-jammed and dynamic, as we have sprawled around the *Bond's* decks, trying to get more than our hands on one of the few available chairs, and dipping into books—that choosing one subject a trifle less becalmed than another overtaxes the ingenuity. The happenings around and at Scoglitti were easy to write about. They were sufficiently active to write themselves. They had to their advantage the self-starter of events. But these accordion-pleated days and nights, they are an entirely different matter.

Of course, I would like to report that Schicklgruber has at last scuttled himself, or that Tojo has come by water wing to give himself up to the citizens of California. But something tells me—perhaps one of Rickenbacker's seagulls—that you might suspect me of rushing the seasons. So I'll let such items, however tasty, wait until hopes have grown into facts.

What follows is in a slightly different key. I'm not certain that it's Navy. I'm not sure that an Annapolis graduate or a regular, steady, seafaring man would agree with it. It may be too landlubber and Reservist for their saline tastes. Yet I promise you it is born of no spirit of mutiny.

Blame our position. America is nearer. Home is closer. So are the "leaves" which—God, Neptune and our superiors willing—we will all get. What induced or provoked the nostalgia of the next few paragraphs was something that happened at the conclusion of last night's program of classical Victrola records.

THE "HAVE NOTS"

If you recall, the final number, by request, was a transcript of Marian Anderson's full-throated and glorious singing of the *Ave Maria*. No sooner had the first round, clear notes reached the ears of one man than this auditor, moved apparently by more than musical interests, smiled a faraway, happy smile and exclaimed, "God, but isn't it good to hear a woman's voice again?"

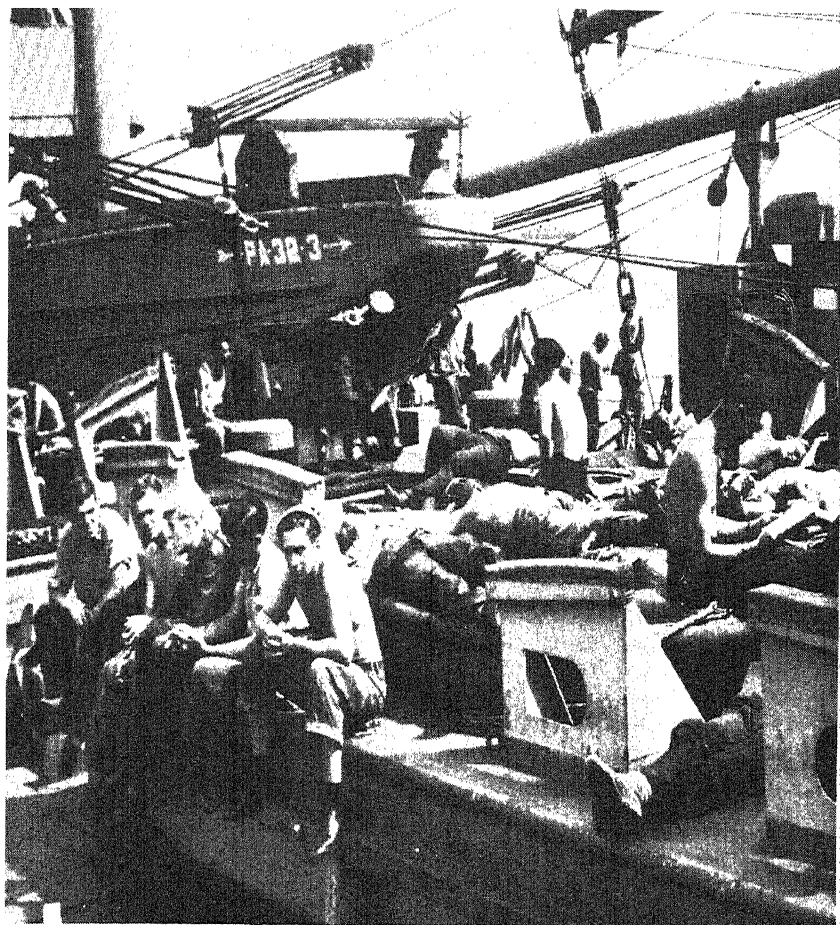
"Yes," agreed his companion, "indeed it is, even when that woman happens to have the world's most beautiful voice."

Now I promise not to expose you to the exclusive, cold-shouldering jargon of the music critics. Let's get back to a woman's voice. To be more precise, let's get back to women. I mean women in general.

Will Rogers once had an interview with the Pope. After expressing his admiration for His Holiness and the Vatican, Will said the only thing lacking in the Vatican was the woman's touch. The same complaint could be reasonably made against the Navy, when the Navy is at sea. It wasn't until I heard Marian Anderson last evening that I realized how much my ears had been aching for a voice which was not baritone. During the past two months our ears have been exposed to an orchestra of voices composed only of bass viols and kettledrums.

Now for battle purposes it is a fine thing not to have a High "C" afloat with us. You must admit, however, that Low "G's" do become monotonous. This, no doubt, is why the man last night, when he heard Marian Anderson, forgot her and her music, and responded so strangely to the catnip in her woman's voice.

It's not only the lack of female voices that we have begun to suffer from. We just don't feel inclined to say certain things to a man that we do to a woman. A woman is, of course, more than her voice. We have also been missing that which surrounds—encases—how shall I say it?—a woman's vocal cords. Needless to say, I mean her companionship. Even Lord Nelson needed his vacation from the waves (small "w," please), as Lady Hamilton knew; I have in mind the valiant, the properly



Department of Anticlimax

THE "HAVE NOTS"

worshiped hero of Trafalgar, who was famous for his victories and for one eye, only half of which (according to the wags) was on the British Navy, the other half being reserved for Lady Hamilton.

Since, from a purely ocular point of view, most of us are better men than Nelson, we could stand with casting our two eyes on someone from the opposite sex; someone who wasn't dressed in khaki; yes, though I hate to hurt any feelings, someone beautiful for a change.

There are other changes for which some of us arrant landlubbers would be grateful, just to break the seafaring-ness of our seafaring life.

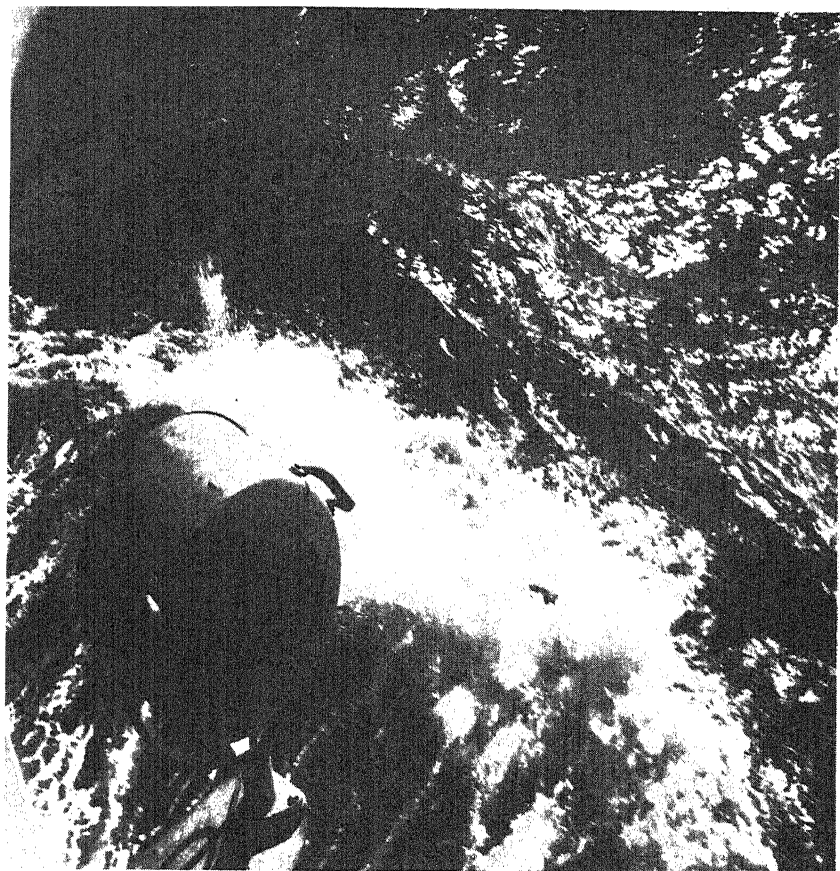
There's liquor, for example.

Let's start with just good old unfrozen, unpowdered, cow-sprung milk. I mean milk from a cow; from that four-legged lactal brewer Arthur Guiterman once described as

The cautious, collapsible cow [who]
Gives milk by the sweat of her brow
Then under the trees
She folds her front knees
And sinks fore and aft with a bow.

Even milk, cold, thick milk from the ice-box, would gurgle comfortably past the palate right now. Or a soda, heavy with heavy ice cream and heavy chocolate. Or a Coca-Cola, colder than the crushed ice in it.

You see—you must remember—there are other things to drink in the world besides coffee. There's beer, for instance; great long steins of it, sweating before and after taking. And there's gin, in this form or that, but still capable of the same internal hoofwork. And there's Scotch. And there's rye. And there's bourbon (bourbon, which the unknowing will get fancy about, Frenchifying *burr-bun* into *bour-bon*, as if the royal Louis had sipped it in mint juleps). There's even Irish, if you like, and a lot do. And there are wines and wines, with the American vintages growing better and better every month in every way, as if Dr. Coué had them under control.



Wake

THE "HAVE NOTS"

Speaking of drinks, what about a table for two, with the right person on the other side of the table? This dining all the time with a gruff roomful of shark bait does grow a bit confining conversationally, to put it mildly. And dancing. And—and—oh, well, why torture ourselves.

God asked Noah to see to it that the personnel of the Ark should go up the gangplank two by two—male and female in each case. Uncle Sam has different notions about the Navy. Maybe he's right. Perhaps he's wiser. Who knows?

We love the Navy all right, all right, all right. And it's just as well we do, considering who may be listening. And we wouldn't have missed being in on the Scoglitti show for anything. But, in all honesty and just for a few days' change, when and if we get those "leaves," won't it be something of a pleasure to go to the bathroom instead of the head; to know that your heart is on your left side rather than to port; to put your feet on a floor which is not a deck; to sleep in a bed which can be told from a sack; to look out a window which is not a port-hole; to walk upstairs instead of always going up a ladder; to eat a dinner which is not chow; and to see some people who are not hands and most certainly aren't men?

I ask the question rhetorically. But the liar who answers negatively deserves to be keelhauled. Because, Lord God, what is this damn war all about, if it isn't to get the damn thing over with decisively and to get back to the lives and the pleasures and the values which, as servicemen, we have temporarily and cheerfully forsworn?

I was about to mention sex, if you remember it, but I see my time is up.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Washington*) The fact that coffee is unrationed again in the United States is one of the surest proofs of how successful the Allies have been in the war against the U-boat. (*London*) Europe is still tingling today with rumors because of the sudden meeting of the British War Cabinet at 1:30 this morning

THE "HAVE NOTS"

and the renewed Allied offensives against remaining Sicilian defenses. (*Allied Headquarters, North Africa*) American Flying Fortresses pounded the airdrome north of Rome while Allied planes struck around Naples, at Messina, and in the Tyrrhenian Sea. (*London*) Demands for Toscanini's return were scribbled on the walls of La Scala in Milan by anti-Fascists yesterday. (*Moscow*) The Red Army has begun an encirclement drive on Orel. (*South Pacific*) American heavy bombers continued their full-scale attacks on Salamaua and Munda.

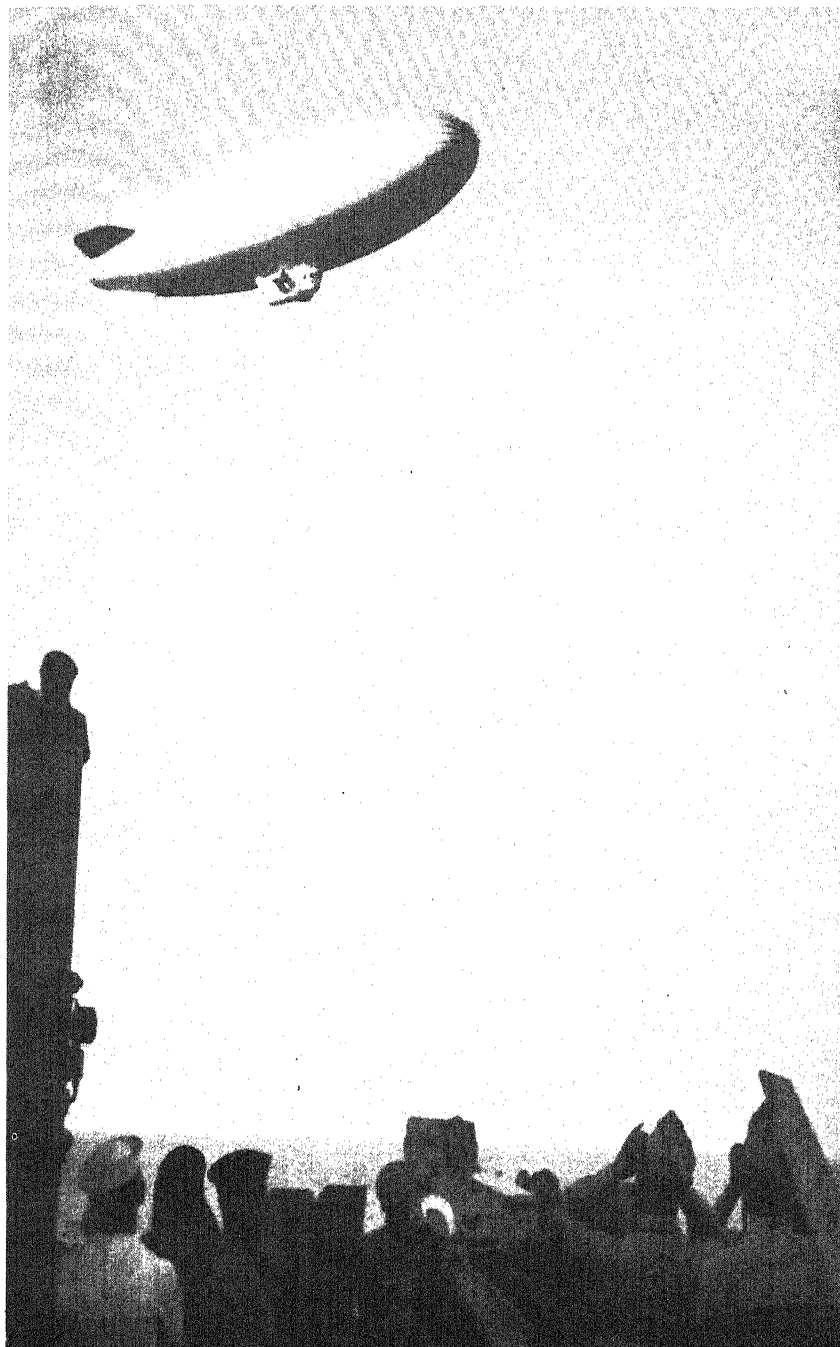
32. *To Be Continued*

By this time tomorrow, men of the *Bond*, the Flag will have been lowered. By this time tomorrow, men of the Flag, we will have executed under stern orders a ship-to-shore movement in record-breaking time.

It is over. I refuse to say, "Captain, oh my Captain," because it has not been a fearful trip. We of the Flag have greatly enjoyed being with you. We wish to thank Captain Thackrey and all of you for your many kindnesses. We trust we have not put you out too literally. No matter how you dreaded to see us come aboard, or how we dreaded to face the discomforts of moving and a change, I think you will agree that the differences between the men of the *Bond* and the men of the Flag have been chiefly nonexistent.

After the first inevitable dog-sniffing days, we have forgotten Ship and Flag. We remember only that all of us were jointly included in the operations of a Task Force which, off Scoglitti in southern Sicily, did what it set out to do. And did it with incredibly few casualties, in an incredibly short time, in incredibly good order, without losing a ship there, on the way over or back, and with results which have already begun to create repercussions on world history.

A funny thing, world history. Take this ship and us who are on it, for instance. We are Americans, sprung from many races. We come from all parts of the United States; from all kinds of faiths, jobs, backgrounds, homes. We have all known Mussolini's name and reputation for too long a time. We all knew where Sicily was, even if practically none of us had ever



First Proof of Home

TO BE CONTINUED

heard of a little village called Scoglitti, which is too small to be found on most Sicilian maps.

But if, ten or five years ago, or three months back, anyone had told us that, by coming as a group to Scoglitti in Sicily, we would be doing our crowbar's bit to dislodge Mussolini's balcony, we would have out-hyenaed Little Audrey in our laughter. Yet this is what has happened, and this is where as a Task Force we have stepped into history and where world history has become a part of all our individual histories.

Having assisted in the undoing, hence the doing, of this much, we realize all the more how terribly much remains to be done before we are at last free to go our separate ways. Meanwhile we have our memories and our hopes. Our memories and hopes, and our knowledge that the beliefs we hold are the more secure because of what as a Force we ventured in a troubled world.

Scoglitti! You sons of boats and beaches! *Scoglitti!* And Farewell.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE

(*Algiers*) Allied bombers are now within easy range of any part of the Italian mainland. The battle for Sicily now appears to be nearing its end. The American Seventh Army under General Patton has captured the city of San Stefano, crumpling the flank of Axis positions. The pending Eighth Army offensive against Catania is now under way.

FINALE

The fighting in Sicily ended on August 17, 1943. The invasion of the Italian mainland began on September 3.

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